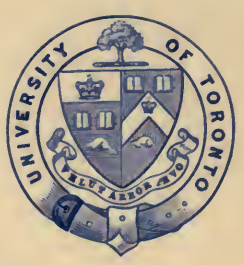

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CICERO,

A DRAMA.

LONDON:
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TEMPLE BAR.

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B649c

CICERO,

A DRAMA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"MOILE'S STATE TRIALS."

[Henry Bliss]

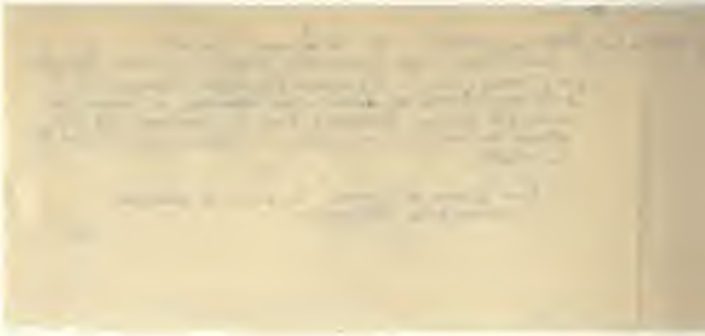
52671
2/1/02

LONDON:
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL AND CO.,
STATIONERS' HALL COURT;
AND
B. KIMPTON, 43, HIGH HOLBORN.
MDCCCXLVII.

Nicholas Thirning Moile: of the Inner Temple.
"The State Trials" are Dramatic Poems: 1. Anne Ayliffe for Heresy. 2. Sir William for High Treason & 3. Mary Queen of Scots – for Beauty, it might be said, for therein perhaps was the gravamen of her crimes in the eyes of Elizabeth. Pub. in 1838. 2nd Ed.; in 1842.

This "Cicero, a Drama" is full of thought, beautifully expressed.

H.S.



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CICERO,

A DRAMA.

CICERO.

THE OVERTURE.

Οὔ μ' ἔτι, παρθενικαὶ μελιγάρυες ἱερόφωνοι,
Γυῖα φέρειν δύναται. Βάλε δή, βάλε, κηρύλος εἴην,
Οσπ' ἐπὶ κύματος ἄνθος ἅμ' ἀλκυόνεσσι ποτῆται,
Νηδεὲς ἦτορ ἔχων, ἀλιπόρφυρος εἴαρος ὄρνις.

THE choral hours of summer cease to hymn,
Their dance has fled, their wreaths are scattered dim;
O'er Ocean's brow a boundless scowl is shown;
The pale shores peal with melancholy moan;
Dim eve has pinions from the mount unfurled,
And wind with scythe like winter sears the world:
Clouds after rain return to pall the south,
And yon bay oriel yawns a cavern's mouth.

And music's maidens bow their head to earth,
And art forgets its grace, and lore its worth:
And mirk as rust the mirror's charm has ceased;
And crystal wine-cups languish at the feast.
E'en gold its lustre lacks, its hue the gem;
The galley drifts o'er seas it used to stem;
An owlet whoops where lattices gave light;
A broken arch o'erhangs the terraced height;
The waning Moon as jagged lours above:
Oh hope, and health, and loveliness, and love,
And aspirations high as heaven that ranged,
Each phantom vanished like a friend estranged!
Till morn returns as night, and every star is changed.

Then said he, " Cease my heart, nor dare repine,
Though the wind's fortune or the wave's be thine:
The wind that wanders and exhales in song
The bloom of valleys it has sighed along,
Or wave the seaward wing of morn has fanned
To break and murmur on the stranger's strand.
But bridle pride, nor more let lips offend."
Then mute he mused, and walked without a friend;
And dark his counsels in their den were urned,
And in its prison paced his mind and turned,
As lorn a lion stalks through bars discerned;

But bitter was the pang, his spirit inly yearned,
Till the fire kindled forth to flame, and thus its utterance burned.

" God! of whose grace this beauteous world was born,
And man awoke from nothingness to morn,
Awhile to gaze and serve, be blest and just,
Then merge in darkness and rejoin the dust;
Cleanse thou my heart and fill with zeal divine,
Nor let my thoughts all perish with their shrine,
But so illume them ere the grave inurn,
That here my service may make some return
To thee for life, or something to mankind
For what their toil my sustenance assigned;
Something at least to chase an hour they chide—
Oh! that I dared aspire to raise their hearts and guide."

As when health wakens blithe in morning's light,
Or drums salute a banner hoist for fight,
Or worth receives the crown for service earned,
Or love the faltering hand of love returned;
New and strange impulse to my thought was given;
The weight that bowed me fell, the bond was riven,
The mist dissolved that darkened me and chilled;
Earth altered, space intoned, a radiance thrilled,

And ether glowed with consciousness restored :
My mind emerged, it sallied forth, it soared;
The white heaven opened as a dome on high,
And from the far blue zenith of the sky,
A star-crowned seraph stooped in shining stole,
And trumpet-tongued gan commune with my soul.
" Come up, come hither, and the past behold!
Ephemeral man, why delve thy grave for gold?
Or tempt the race to fame and office sped,
With trampling throngs whose hoof shall bruise thy head?
Renounce a task thy strength should ne'er have claimed.
Abandon lists unjustly judged and framed;
Where all disowning make thee doubt thy worth.
Resign earth's honours to the sons of earth.
Leave there thy wrongs, leave each regret and fear :
If there be aught thou canst achieve, 'tis here.
Then swift and high wing hitherward thy flight,
High to o'erpeer the veil of ancient night,
And swift o'ertake the past; come see it and indite."

" What spirit art thou, and who attends thy side,
That sister star of fainter form?" I cried,—
Caught up and heavenward borne through air and light,
As mounts the arrow clouds receive from sight,

As snowy spray shoots up the heavens to kiss,
Where rainbows bower a cataract's abyss,—
" And whence this power of more than dreams devise,
In you to summon and in me to rise ?"
Thence, winged with will, on air incumbent high,
As clouds, we coursed the cycles of the sky,
Yet gazed beneath on mount and meadows green,
Woods, rivers, isles and lakes of silver sheen:
Such as the morning stars beheld and praised,
When first their choir on earth's creation gazed,
And all the Sons of God a shout of wonder raised.
And now, as refluent rivers seek their source,
When the moon calls and seas pursue her course,
Earth's generations, age on age amassed,
The Frank, the Vandal, Goth and Hun repassed.
And shadowy hosts again to conquest trod,
And Kings and Captains old resumed the rod,
Charles of the iron crown, and Attila scourge of God.
The Crescent gleamed. The East and West were riven.
The starry cross to Constantine was given.
Till one Imperial shade the world o'erflowed;
Pagods regained each peristyle they owed,
The dog Anubis barked, and the ox Apis lowed,
And dynasties of despots fell as trees a tempest strowed.

But while, thus gazing, hand in hand we sped,
As swans seek southward where the sun has fled,
Or Sea Nymphs glide the sunlit waves among,
My meteor guide resumed her narrative and sung.

" Of origin unknown, of name concealed,
And form to thee of mortals first revealed,
We of God's servants, who possess this sphere
And serve mankind, are twain embodied here.
Others incorporal—some revolve the day,
Some round the zodiac herald earth her way;
Some fold her fountains and as herds divide;
Some from the south bring summer as a bride;
This gives the embryo, that the germ increase;
One binds the dew and tingeing as a fleece,
Against high noon an awning hangs above:
One tames the wind to murmur as the dove;
While one endows with life each being's breath,
And one, oh gift as meet! endows with death.
But we, we mingle with the mind of man,
To wing its sallies and connect their span
With all that hath been or again may be,
As light connects the farthest star with thee.
'Tis ours to soothe the sad, the lonely lead,
Give want its wish, and learning half its meed;

Ours to illume dim night with morning's blush;
Change deserts to the vale where waters gush;
Flit over earth, and cull fair scenes as flowers,
Which girls from gardens bring to bridal bowers;
To roam where mountain pines the clouds salute,
Or orange alleys mingle flower and fruit,
Or myrrh and cassia scent the columned court;
Or dive to coral caves where Nereids sport;
Or pierce the folded rocks, and wake a zone
Where earth's primeval monsters sleep in stone,
Where giant Saurians many a rood lie curled,
Where Dragons darkened day with wing unfurled,
And Mammoth and Behemoth shook the world.

" Nor less our power o'er pageants man has sped;
To join far years, and summon shadows dread,
And wipe again the tears which other ages shed,
And renovate the ruin, and reanimate the dead.
Nor sleep, whose bosom pillows every brain,
Whose hands unhasp the fangs of care and pain,
And every sense disarm, and every limb enchain,
Not sleep, nor haply death can wrest man's spirit from our reign.
Thus dowered we pass like meteor shapes by night;
Of presence subtler far than mortal sight;

And, like the Angel in the wind that lurks,
None sees our form though all discern our works.
Whose traces still in every heart combine,
Though few distinguish each, and who define,
My sister's memory call, imagination mine.

" But most we love the studious breast to haunt,
That toils in silence, solitude and want,
Nor craves reward beyond what inly glows,
Save his approof whose will the toil bestows.
As one who digs where science marks the plain,
Digs many a fathom sand and stone in vain,
Digs for the fount; though pride contemn the delf,
And sneers nigh make the delver doubt himself;
Till pure from deepest clay the waters burst,
And sport in air, and feed a people's thirst.

" Such have we seen thee, by the sea-girt shore,
And midland lake, from youth devote to lore,
Afraid to tongue thy thought ashamed to hide,
Ignorant how friends are made or fortune tried,
Too proud to follow them, too weak to lure:
A lonely bird, or brook, in woods obscure,
That winds and warbles to the deepest glen,
Nor seeks applause nor loves the haunts of men.

And for thy worth and woes have mercy moved,
And vows been heard and far as meet approved,
Our wings for answer have been speeded swift,
To sooth thy sorrows, and thy soul uplift,
And waft it to its wish, and kindle with a gift.

" Now has our meteor flight revolved the spheres
Which earth had wound through twice nine-hundred years;
And yon red comet was the eastern star,
That led to Bethlem kings and sages far,
To hail His birth who suffered man to save,
Reclaimed their morals, and their sins forgave,
And took from death the sting, and darkness from the grave.
Dread scenes! but there of faith thy guidance pray,
Lest ours profane them, and mislead thy way.
On! and descend where yonder vapour lours,
Through which the moon its traits of silver showers,
A City lies beneath begirt with walls and towers.
Behold her heights with porch and temple crowned;
Baths, obelisks and arcs are piled around;
Vaults over vaults her theatres infold;
Pillars rear high their statuary gold;
Long avenues of tombs from every gate;
Long aqueducts on vast arcades elate;

A river yoked with bridges, thronged with barks;
Quays, marts, streets, domes, basilicas, and parks.
There, at the mountain's base, above the deep,
Couched, as a tigress with her cubs asleep,
Filled but not sated with the spoils of earth,
Amidst her slaves and princes, crimes and worth,
Of arms the mother, and of arts the home,
The arbitress of earth, the legislator Rome!
Such as she burst the last Dictator's chain,
Ere her first Prince's yoke was shunned in vain.

" Descend! E'en now the struggle has begun,
Between who shape that yoke and who would shun;
And champions fierce shall meet to-morrow's sun,
And words be uttered there and deeds be done,
Which earth shall thrill to hear, till earth her course has run.
Go, mingle with the scene, live o'er the time,
With many a virtue signed, and many a crime;
And midst them mark that drama most sublime,
O'er which the hosts of heaven are fain to wait,
A great man struggling with the storms of fate.
Descend, and this the gift we promised bear!
Unheard as light, invisible as air,
Pass where thou wilt, inaudible, unseen!
From thee no bosom shall its secret screen;

No space delay thy foot, no wall forbid;
E'en from thyself thy presence shall be hid;
As, though our forms have now dissolved in mists,
Our voice above thee, like a lark's, exists,
And, though our voice subside, our presence still subsists,
So shalt thou pass among those great antagonists,
From scene to scene, from heart to heart, where'er thy fancy lists."

Instant, as dews sweep down a mountain's wood,
Or snow-flakes earthward borne, in Rome I stood.
And, as the dew when bursts midsummer's sun,
Or snow-flake when it falls where waters run,
Instant I changed, dissolved, and passed away,
Transfused, and mixed in all that round me lay;
Conscious, yet lost; though absent, present there;
A shadow merged in night, a breath in air,
Etherial heat through all materials known,
The electric stream o'er every surface thrown,
Nothing yet part of all, with all things yet alone.

Χαιρε μοι Ρώμα, θυγάτηρ Αρηος,
Χρυσεόμιτρα, δαΐφρων ἄνασσα,
Σεμνὸν ἃ ναίεις ἐπὶ γᾶς Ολυμπον
Αἰὲν ἄθραυστον.

ACT I.

SCENE THE FIRST.

THE STUDY.

Inde, ubi prima quies medio jam noctis abactæ
Curriculo expulerat somnum, quum fœmina primum,
Cui tolerare colo vitam tenuique Minerva
Impositum, cinerem et sopitos suscitat ignes,
Noctem addens operi—

Fair to the moon Mount Palatine uprolled
Fronts, quoins, and pediments, and roofs of gold,
Terrace o'er terrace, flecked in sheen and shade,
With fane and fountain, grove and colonnade,
And balcons hung in air, and towers that heaven essayed.
And where the long white portico aspired,
Which Catulus had reared, and Clodius fired,
From the same embers rose, by Rome replaced,
A marble house, with courts and columns graced,
With gardens green, where trees imbowered the grass,
And halls and galleries fair, and gates of brass.

Within, all else from care and labour ceased,
All, save one chamber, which o'erlooked the east;
With ivory net-work ceiled, with cedar floored,
With niches nine where manuscripts were stored;
There o'er the desk one lonely taper lit,
A sage with style and tablets bent and writ.

Tall was his form, of frank and generous mien,
Well featured face, large eyes, and look serene;
Though in his lip a latent sneer was curbed,
And in his cheek the throb of thought disturbed.
His neck seemed long, his tresses touched with age;
His garments comely, yet as suits a sage.
But grace each movement and each glance refined,
All teemed with goodness, all respired with mind;
A tenement for wisdom, truth and worth,
And formed to counsel, charm and awe the earth.
He wrought, with many a pause, and reference back,
And style oft turned to obliterate its track,—
Till dropped, as if its stated course were closed.
Couched on the desk his hands and head reposed;
As less for ease than doubts beyond his art.
At last he rose, and pushed the desk apart,
And paced the cedar floor, and thus addressed his heart.

"So much for fables. Oh for truth, for truth!
Hope serves instead; nor vanishes like youth.
This taper wanes and flickers to its last;
Even as my life. How wears the night?' Tis past!
The scattering clouds o'er Alba's mountain gleam,
Blanched by the breath of morning's silvery team.
Night's raven steeds have sought the Stygian deep;
Whence care and toil ascend to war with sleep,—
Long vanquished here. Why court its suffrage now,
Or try vain arts to soothe this feverish brow?
The sleep I covet rests in Tullia's tomb;
Sleep free of phantoms, darkness void of gloom,
Peace which no arms of Anthony invade,
And the sole freedom Rome has ne'er betrayed.

"Oh had I perished, as a meteor's train,
When Cataline was crushed, or Clodius slain;
While my heart's courage with the tempest vied,
And my tongue's torrent poured as Adria's tide;
When theatres rose up to hail me great,
And senates named new founder of the state;
Or Greece from banishment pursued me home,
And Latium on her shoulders bore to Rome.

Ere I beheld my country's rights reversed,
And learned to flatter where I should have cursed:
For what? To mourn a daughter reft of life,
And chide a thankless son, and change a treacherous wife.

"Why was I born? The Delphian song was right:
Man's happiest fate is ne'er to see the light,
His next is, seen to shun it, and retire,
Swift as you fly the dwelling rapt with fire.
Yet can my life the Pythia's answer blame,
Given when I craved the path to deathless fame,
'Let thine own genius guide thee as the pole,
Nor heed the people's voice, but speak thy soul!'
Still let me follow, and exhaust my fate.
Heaven yet reserves mine age for something great.
Though Atticus did well, who gilt his chain;
And Cato well, who rent his own in twain;
And Brutus well, who made the world's as vain:
A path of glory beams o'er their career,
As soars yon comet's through the starry sphere,
To voice my thought through all succeeding time,
Lift up mankind from dust to deeds sublime,
Bear back my country's pride to whence it fell,
And hurl the despot from his height to hell.

Then made their victim whom I sought to save,
Whate'er of me is mortal give the grave!
Thus my decline the setting sun beseems;
Whose disk dilates as nearer earth it beams,
Till based on ocean's verge or Alpine snows,
When clouds that veiled his pathway gild its close,
Waves gleam with fire, with gold the mountains blaze,
And heaven unfolds its gate for gods to gaze.
While mortals worship as they lose the light,
And sally to the sphere unknown of night.
Hark—footsteps—voices! Ho! is Philo there?
Needs must I break the slumber I would share."
He said, and seized the glimmering lamp, and hied,
And drew a veil of crimson cloth aside,
(Which plaited from an archway reached the floor);
And to an anteroom passed through the vaulty door.

SCENE THE SECOND.

THE TYRANNICIDE.

Ἥριπε δ', ὡς ὅτε τις δρῦς ἤριπεν ἢ ἀχερωΐς,
Ἠὲ πίτυς βλωθρὴ, τήν τ' οὔρεσι τέκτονες ἄνδρες
Ἐξέταμον πελέκεσσι νεήκεσι, νήιὸν εἶναι.

A well-clothed slave the antechamber kept.
Stretched on a mattress by the arch he slept;
And in the yellowy rays the lamp threw down
His broad low forehead seemed in sleep to frown:
And eyelids large with raven lashes edged,
And swarthy cheek which youth had scarcely fledged,
Slight trunk, ill measured limbs, and dusky skin,
Showed shadows of the soul that now awoke within.
" Go, boy—see who the old porter has received!
He pouts, poor youth, of sleep too soon bereaved.
If his were sleep?" But Philo sped as sent.
Back through the curtained arch his master went;

Where had he scarce the lattice green withdrawn,
The taper quenched, and welcomed in the dawn,
And in its breath and radiance blithe reclined,
When, the slave entering, steps were heard behind.
" Thou hast come quickly—who comes after? tell!"

" Titus Pomponius Atticus"

" Comes well!
Thrice welcome, Atticus, to Rome and me!"

" Hail, Marcus Tullius! Is all well with thee?"
The comer cried—of bearing kind and meek;
More years but fewer cares had seared his cheek;
Of stature less; light hair, and milky brows,
And face uncouth and harmless as a cow's.
But oh! his speech like music charmed the ear,
Soft as the flute, as chimes distinct and clear.
And sage discretion tempered every tone,
And high resolve no enmity to own;
But bear with equal thanks whate'er impends,
Buffet or boon, from fortune and from friends:
To seek no office, and pursue no suit,
But till the flowers of life and cull the fruit,

And smooth the path, alleviate the load,
And light the feet of all that passed his road,
And look for no return but what that task bestowed.
The friends embraced with love from childhood bred:
Yet scarce brooked question whence and whither sped,
When thus who entered spoke to themes profounder led.

" From Greece I come, winged hither by the south,
And yestermorn debarked at Tiber's mouth.
But what to learn! Has madness seized our youth?
Can this which all asseverate still be truth?
Have gowns become a cloak for daggers bare,
Our laws an ambuscade, our rites a snare?
The senate's session a gladiator's wake?
The curule chair a scaffold and a stake?
Where Rome's first magistrate with knives beset,
That closed him round, a leopard in a net,
Mid chiefs with whom his sovereignty was shared,
The friends he loved, and enemies he spared,
Was hacked with thirty thrusts, and headlong thrown,
To bite the base where Pompey frowned in stone.
If true, my galley for thy need was sped,
Though darker omens furl the sail than spread,

Spread to condole thy bride's ingrate return,
And mingle tears with thine at Tullia's urn."

" Oh Atticus! what thanks can pay thy love?
That beams through darkness like the dawn above,
Exhaustless as the air on which I live,
And readier than the earth to bear and give:
Thou friend, whose care like Providence awakes,
Like wisdom comes when every god forsakes.
For private griefs my tears have ceased to fall:
'Tis Rome's alarm that inward drains them all.
Recline, and hear the truth thou would'st obtain:
Nor let truth wrong thy reverence for the slain;
For thine are thoughts all patriot save in hate,
And prize Rome's weal above her master's fate.

" A tempest closed, ill omens had forerun,
But earth methought ne'er hailed a brighter sun,
Than sallied flaming up yon azure arch,
To lighten gods and men, the ides of March.
The Senate met, for nobler ends than feared:
We sat by pillars the great Pompey reared;
When, graced with all the radiance empire sheds,
On ivory seat high borne o'er fifty heads,

In gold and purple, with a laurel crown,
Cæsar, Dictator of the world, came down.
His consuls, prætors, tribunes marched before,
Each with the ensigns of the rank he bore,
Ædiles and quæstors, all with power endued;
Favourites flocked round him, and half Rome pursued.
Lictors and lackeys filled the porch in front.
Cæsar descending entered first, as wont.
The Senate rose: our welcome had his thanks.
He swept with followers past between our ranks,
Reached the gold chair, and scarce had ta'en his place,
When Cimber knelt to supplicate for grace,
His brother's pardon. Cæsar waved dissent.
Then others round for banished Cimber bent:
Cassius and Casca joined, and Brutus prest;
The conscious all closed round, and urged the same request.
Cæsar refused, with looks of stern surprise.
Sudden a halo flashed from Cimber's eyes,
And springing, like a hound that slips his check,
He grasped and rent the robe from Cæsar's neck.
'Why this is force!' said Cæsar, half appalled,
And raised his style. 'Help, brother!' Cimber called.
Whose cry dirks answered with a glittering dart,
As adders from their coil at every heart.

Casca's plunged first, and pierced the victim's throat.
Steel clashed; cries mingled scarce in human note:
One bound the leopard tried to burst the pack;
A dagger met his breast, and hurled him back.
Blood followed blows by each confederate done:
Till Cæsar cried, 'And Brutus, thou! my son.'
Then raised his arms, as if for death's embrace,
And in his gown o'ercovering head and face,
Fell, like a column by the winds o'ercast,
And prone at Pompey's footstool groaned his last."

Silence ensued, awhile by neither broke,—
Till thus, with downcast eyes, Pomponius spoke.
" And so, so fell the master of mankind!
Their first in arms, in empire, and in mind.
Whom no defect though many a fault disgraced,
Brilliant in literature, refined in taste,
Polite in manners, piteous, self-restrained,
Laborious, generous, and of truth unfeigned;
Soldier, lawgiver, orator and sage.
Whom Rome shall vaunt to earth through every age,
By arts accomplished, and by nature born
To win the world, to rule it, and adorn.

Even thus he perished, in his mid career,
With all his pomp, his laurels never scar,
His shows, his monuments, his triumphs all,
O'er Asia, Egypt, Afric, Spain, and Gaul;
Decked, as a bull that leads a trophied train
Nor deems the hand that fondles him shall brain,
And mocked with honours scarce a god's excel,
Prayers, altars, fanes and flamens, thus he fell.
And with him fell what vast designs he framed!
The Isthmus severed, and the marsh reclaimed,
The sea in narrower compass taught to foam;
The laws reform, the embellishment of Rome,
The savage civilized, the foe controlled,
And earth regenerate to an age of gold.
But say, had all his followers bared the knife?
Was not one arm upraised for Cæsar's life?
Where stood the senate? Lepidus might flee,
But Anthony has courage, where was he?"

"Him had Trebonius beckoned forth the gate;
And when showed Lepidus a front to fate?
The work was instant; sooner done than said:
Of us, some cheered, some murmured, and some fled.
I stood entranced to gaze at Pompey's form:
Methought he towered, as Ætna o'er a storm;

Throes swelled the breast, and light illumed the face,
While Heaven's revenge was flashing round the base.
Dilate with triumph, and instinct with life,
The stone, with spirit clothed, exulted o'er the strife;
As o'er Pharsalia's carnage, Egypt's guile,
The parricide of Rome, and brigands of the Nile."

" All barbarous scenes!"

" No! this a scene to laud,
For earth to emulate, and Heaven applaud!
If men invoke the thunderbolt on crime,
And deem for this a godhead reigns sublime,
Can man rise nearer to divine in worth,
Than when he smites an autocrat to earth?
Daring to wreak the wrongs his country brooks,
Her laws partake, and providence o'erlooks."

" The right I doubt, the policy distrust,"—
Pomponius cried—" for Providence is just;
And wrongs the laws partake and gods endure
Scarce need instead a homicide to cure.
Ah man! beware, nor challenge powers divine!
Who tread that winepress seldom taste the wine.

It is a two-edged sword, whose blows rebound;
A tree, one shakes while others glean the ground:
But thou pursue thy tale, may that my fears confound."

"Scarce was the heart that harassed earth at rest;
The crimson pool still welling from his breast;
Throngs struggling to the door within to peer,
And thence recoiling, pale and dumb with fear;
Blood signed and panting while our Patriots stood,
As hounds o'er prey that levelled wall and wood,
But hounds that lacked the hunter's voice for guide;
To me when Brutus stretched his steel and cried:
I answered his, Rome's challenge, and mankind's.
'Ho! Patriots, forward! swifter than the winds!
The onset prospers; but is all achieved?
What, have ye dared this business half conceived?
Forward! while fate and panic lead for us.
Yours is the instant—seize it—use it—Thus!
Let slaves sink yonder corse in Tiber's flood.
You to the forum, in your robes of blood!
March out, with daggers as a flag unfurled,
Proclaim the despot has to hell been hurled,
And Rome redeemed by you to rule again the world.

On! and by nothing let your way be barred,
March up the Capitol, possess it, guard,
There call the Senate, there, ye Pretors, call;
Condemn the Tyrant's honours, cancel all,
Raze out his acts, his name, where'er enrolled:
Fright foes; decree new legions, bribe the old;
Strip all his minions of their axe and rods;
Ere sunset do it; and then thank the gods!
Lest Cæsar's blood as dragons' teeth be sown;
Heirs and avengers never fail a throne:
Lest Rome change masters, and in heavier gyves
Mourn the dead king, whose kingdom still survives.
Souls long enslaved forget how freemen live:
Go, force them to exert the liberty you give!'"

As golden gleams when clouds in winter break,
Hope lit the brow of Atticus, who spake—
"Bold but sage counsel! And they heard your tongue?"

"Less than Troy listened when Cassandra sung"—
The host replied, and clasped his hands, and upward wrung.
"Oh child of Priam! vain as was thy dower,
Me thy god gifted with a vainer power.

A power the brave contemn, the base malign;
A light, whose rays consume me as they shine;
An art to cozen fools, fatigue the sage,
Alarm each friend, and goad a foe to rage.
Ah, had persuasion made my tongue like truth's,
When Rome and reason so conjured these youths,
Here never more had kingdom crooked a knee,
But sunk with Cæsar fathomless at sea:
While Rome's Republic, throned on mountains seven,
Resumed her old vicegerency for Heaven,
Sunward her eagles had their wing unfurled,
And borne once more our mandates through the world."

Buoyed on the image of his country's pride,
His soul o'er all her empire seemed to glide,
And shudder to her fall, while Atticus replied.

"Vain dreams! But vainer was your Patriots' hope,
Who raught at meteors far above their scope;
Ignorant how states are founded, empires won,
Or what remained to do, or what was done.
The attempt surpassed their talent to complete,
And even their virtues had ensured defeat.
Yet of your counsel was no portion ta'en?"

" Enough to mar it, and make all in vain"—
Was Cicero's reply, who thus pursued the strain.
" They seized the Capitol, and while employed
In thanking Heaven for blessings ere enjoyed,
Mark Anthony escaped to make each blessing void.
Three slaves brought Cæsar's bier, and homeward bore,
With pendant arm, through alleys tracked in gore.
And Lepidus sought arms in Tiber's isle,
As swims the fox to cover in his wile.
Yet Cassius hired a mob ere evening's fall:
And Decius Brutus sent for troops from Gaul.
But cries intoned for peace: which soon is made
With foes, where one is faithless, one afraid.
Cries too for vengeance pealed: and vengeance works
In devious coverts, as a serpent lurks.
Fate paused, time passed; conditions were arranged,
Wrongs sold, rights lost, and hostages exchanged.
This Dolabella did, who seized and held
The Consul's seat, whence Cæsar had been felled.
The senate met: Earth's temple was the scene.
I, for her cause urged thither to convene,
I, who till then aloof and silent grieved,
Gave now the next best counsel fate received,
Free amnesty for all. It pleased—it past.
Calm intervened; which gathering clouds o'ercast.

Yet smiles shone round; and honest words were loud;
As gleams of sunshine pierce a gathering cloud.
When—woe my country, and accurst the cause!
Cæsar's whole acts were ratified for laws:
And Cæsar's corse was in the Forum burned,
Praised from the Rostra, and with rites inurned.

" Still Anthony, dissembler, watched his hour,
While yet the senate half-resumed its power:
Till crops were high his emissaries sowed,
Were ripe, and forth the mower went and mowed.
Drums beat to pillage through Campania's farms;
And veterans bore him back to Rome in arms.
When—shame to manhood that such insult brooks!
Dead Cæsar's acts were sought in Cæsar's books,
Were found, as Anthony the books inscribed,
And sold for laws, as Anthony was bribed.
The tyrant governed worse in death than life:
A despotism now rose that braved the Patriots' knife,
And Rome in bondage bowed before Antonius and his wife.

" No dog abandoned strives with trustier scent
To ask each pathway where his master went,

Than sought my heart what duty now could crave.
Whether to front Mark Anthony and brave,
Who wooed my silence, and might still my voice?
Or waiting consuls new, of worthier choice,
Reserve me for their dawning year of peace?
Friends urged, fate willed it; and I sailed for Greece:
There to seek rest with literature and thee.
Brundusium's road seemed stormier than the sea:
But ere the Rhegian headland sunk astern,
Loud from the cape my country bade return;
In patriot edicts, consular replies,
And in the adverse tempest pealed her cries;
At Rome once more to post me though alone,
Once more make freedom's voice by mine intone,
And change my country's fate, or e'en fulfil my own."

SCENE THE THIRD.

THE FRIEND.

Rura mihi et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes;
Flumina amem silvasque inglorius. O, ubi campi,
Spercheosque, et virginibus bacchata Lacænis
Taygeta! O, qui me gelidis in vallibus Hæmi
Sistat, et ingenti ramorum protegat umbra!

When Atticus heard this his brow was bowed,
And changed, as sward o'ershadowed by a cloud.
Then rising thrice he paced, in moody march,
From the bayed oriel to the curtained arch;
Then turned where Tullius sat; and grave in tone
Began, with earnest eye and finger prone—
" To change thy country's fate, or e'en fulfil thine own?
For Rome's—that turns on fortune and the fight:
For thine—fulfil, but first conceive it right.
Come, counsels are as wings that mount the gale,
As haven towers that light a sea-beat sail,

Arches, from bank to bank where torrents foam,
Or piled on arches rolling streams to Rome.

" Silent I leave your Patriots and their cause.
Fear not my censure there, nor hope applause!
But blades are out, blows dealt, and will recoil:
The carrion birds already hoot for spoil.
For earth can not drink Cæsar's blood as water.
Expect a refluent tide, a flood of slaughter,
High as an eagre sweeps Arabian shelves;
'Twill whelm the shedders, and may whelm ourselves.
Abandon Rome to fortune or to fate!
Why should'st thou shipwreck seek in storms of state?
Why tempt that sea beyond Herculean bounds,
Where neither reason rules nor speech resounds,
But winds alone with waters hold discourse,
Or monsters black and bitter as their source,
Who wallow in the waves and flout the tempest's force?
Could worth redeem or wisdom guide mankind,
Hast thou not paid each service Rome assigned?
Whose claim is hence what future ages raise,
E'en to give them the remnant of thy days.
For this Arpinum's woods intone to please,
And Tusculum invites with brook and breeze,

Foliage and flowers, and Nymphs possess the scene
To make the desert of thy soul as green.
'Tis theirs through bowers the student's step to guide,
O'er roseate slopes which balusters divide,
Where mixed with planes the pensive willow droops,
And fountains gush by statuary groups.
Or muse thou there with warblers by the rill;
Or gaze from spreading holms that crown the hill;
Where winding terraces o'erhang a plain
Wide spread for herds through Latium to the main;
Whose gleams far flash, as crystal burnished high,
Or steely belt dividing earth and sky:
While dim descried the waves of Tiber foam,
To walls high crowned with column, tower and dome,
Where saffron clouds suspend the canopy of Rome.
There, how man's soul expatiates on the breeze!
How communes and combines with all he sees!
Me in those scenes the mystic Pan inspires
To half believe that folly of our sires,
Who deemed a spirit breathes in every bower,
Waves in each tree, gives every wind its power,
Intones in every stream, exhales in every flower.
To mind alone such sympathies belong:
They thrill beyond all eloquence or song;

Like interchange of looks with those who love,
Or thought for thought perhaps with gods above.

" Yet there communion waits thee more divine.
The illustrious dead shall blend their souls with thine.
Those lights of earth, sole progeny of Jove,
Whose marble forms breathe round the bright alcove,
With voice there volumed wait to soothe thy cares,
And kindle thee with thought to rival theirs.
Go, scan their labours and with thine adorn!
The mount's green robe, the dewy veil of morn,
The stony shade of porticos at noon,
Red evening's cloud, and star attended moon,
Shall sway thy bosom, as a lyre is swept:
The muse shall chase afflictions vainly wept,
Relume the fading images of youth,
Enshrine in them thy life's research for truth,
And hallow thus thy country's tongue and fame,
With thine, till men shall loathe a conqueror's name.
Away! while age, disease, and death forbear,
Triumvirs fierce, that ne'er like Cæsar spare,
But sweep, as Sylla's sword, as Cinna's pike,
As Marius struck, and Anthony may strike."

He ceased. But Tullius, who had watched his guest,
With changing cheek, brim eye, and throbbing breast,
Now clasped the hands of Atticus and prest,
And drew him to the couch and seating thus addrest.

" It is the Syren's song, but more allures,
For death that jarred her magic joins in yours:
To shape the bosom's secret fear with speech,
And clothe desire in words beyond its reach,
Sole spell the Syren or the Muse can teach.
Ah, could my vessel gain that haven's shore!
Had ties less stringent chained me to the oar!
But judge if Ithacus were bound so strong,
Or thou wouldst sever could I rue the thong.

" Life's future borrows of the past its taint,
And yours foreshadows scenes like those you paint;
Bright woodland lakes, lone villas on the mount,
Isles in a stream, or temples o'er its fount.
Where far from camps, the tribune, and the mart,
Nor fasces beat the gate nor cares the heart.
Such hast thou lived; in faction's hour unknown,
In misery's prompt; forgetting wrongs alone;

Each public charge forgone, each private done;
Accuser, foe, or litigant to none;
With every lore and elegance refined,
The refuge, grace, and mirror of mankind!

" But I, as Tiber with a shout leaps down
His native hills, and headlong seeks the town,
Of kindred eddies, turbulence as vain;
And sallying thence but plunges in the main:
I sought the Forum, its applause to learn
Too early and too long to wish return.
And can I now desert the place I won,
Now Rome most needs it and all others shun,
For there a gulph seems opening at my feet?
As soon might Tiber from the seas retreat!
Can nothing close that gulph but Roman worth?
Where was it Curtius spurred to plunge in earth!
Still worth the victim owes if needed still:
Is Rome's the need? be mine the worth and will!
I once left Rome, again I leave it never;
I once saved Rome, and will again endeavour,
Or grasp the helm, and perish in her wreck.
A vow all counsel comes too late to check.

My bark is launched: whatever tempests rave,
I must not fly, but baffle them or brave."

He paused: for zeal in Atticus to speak
Illumed his flaxen brow, and flushed his cheek.
And thus he asked—" What mean these omens dark?
Ah! has the storm already caught thy bark!
If late to save it am I late to share?
But has the Senate met? Hast thou been there?
Or from the rostra has thy voice appealed?
Now, by the gods, be nothing here concealed!
Nor deign deceive thy counsel or thy leech,
Nor doubt thy doom was uttered in that speech.
What hast thou said could Anthony incense?
The noblest heart is oft to ire propense:
I know him, and will seek, and soothe his violence;
But tell me word for word the worst could give his pride offence."

SCENE THE FOURTH.

THE ENEMY.

Ἔθρεψεν δὲ λέοντα
Σίνιν δόμοις ἀγάλακτον
Οὗτος ἀνηρ φιλόμαστον.
Χρονισθεὶς δ' ἀπέδειξεν
Ἔθος τὸ πρὸς τοκήων.

In that fair room, o'er shelves of burnished wood,
In every niche, a muse of marble stood,
Each between busts her favourite sons to show,
Whose minds were limned in manuscripts below.
By chance where couched the friends a Clio towered;
The bust of Plato on her left was bowered,
(Superb it beamed with eloquence and force,
In bearded beauty, like his own discourse):
The right o'erarched a sternly featured bust;
A broad and vaulty skull with brows august;
A Doric fane where wisdom should be shrined,
Or rostra whence her voice might rouse mankind.

O thou! whose reason, eloquence and worth
Made honour's law the public law of earth,
Made generous themes a commonwealth's appeal,
Made Athens great to guard her neighbours' weal,
Ask nothing of their need, their wrongs o'ersee,
And marshal Greece to perish or be free,—
And braved her monarchs, her republics drove,
And flamed and thundered with the voice of Jove.
Meeds, still half imaged in that marble form;
As ruffled seas portend their power in storm,
As black-browed skies with latent flashes scowl,
Or lions when asleep with terror as they prowl.
Deem not dumb idols all devoid of soul!
With life they commune, and each pulse control.
If no electric fire the surface fence,
And radiate sallies subtler than the sense,
'Tis that the shape can mould the gazer's mind
To thoughts that formed the features there designed.
But now, as rapt with impulses like those,
And traits thence kindled, Tullius spake and rose.

" Once more the Senate has convened; once more
My voice has planted stings in every core.

I went, as one who fords a treacherous stream,
Or braves the brink to turn a chariot's team,
Or bursts a burning tower to rouse its folk;
But, summoned as by fate, I went and spoke.
Indignant in rebuke, and rapt in gloom,
I blamed the rites decreed to Cæsar's tomb,
I mourned who voted what their souls contemn,
And prayed of Heaven to pardon Rome and them.
Then censuring every fault since last we met,
Protesting like a friend at faults that threat,
For Dolabella praise and prayers were tried;—
But thou! though absent, Anthony, I cried,
Whose favours done me erst I still profess,
Whose friendship hope, while Rome retains no less,
What mean these warnings thy familiars hint?
That flax inflames at clash of steel and flint:
And let no murmur cross the Consul's path!
'Twere better beard a lion in his wrath.
Is this thy nature—thus to ire propense?
And thy resolve that words shall fire offence?
Why I must bear it, meek indeed though loth,
For who would cross thee armed and angry both?
Only bear also thou with me as meek,
For 'tis my nature and resolve to speak.

Yet hear what terms I proffer for accord!
If ere I breathe one contumelious word,
Or wrong thy life or morals by a breath,
Then be there war betwixt us, war till death.
But while, as Senates use, my thought shall peal,
In fearless truth, on Rome and public weal,
Be angered not! or angry, if thy will,
But know me for a man and Roman still!
Thine arms for self-defence, if needed, clang,
But turn them not on us who here harangue.
Immortal Gods! What wouldest thou achieve?
Wealth? some assert it, I will ne'er believe.
'Tis what the proud man slights, the brave disdains;
And nothing small or sordid swells thy veins.
Though oft associates warp the common mind,
Thine is a steely bow which few can wind.
Nor spoil nor avarice tempts thee thus to vault.
Yet shun, shun e'en suspicion of the fault!

"Fame is thy goal; thou seekest glory's shrine.
Ah! ponder well the path: is glory's thine?
Divide not glory's from thy country's cause;
Nor look for fame in power beyond the laws

In soaring lonely as the vulture soars,
In spreading fear as when a prowler roars,
Shunned as a scaffold, hated as a pest,
And gathering curses where thou hast been blest.
Is this thy glory? Thou hast all mista'en
The pathway, site, and fashion of her fane.
'Tis throned on merit as a mountain's base;
Love rears each column, gratitude must grace;
Truth swells the dome till touching heaven's abode;
And virtue guards the gate, and labour shows the road.
While fear on sand erects her rival cell,
Loathed as a gaol, to fall as Cæsar's fell.

" O Anthony! remember whence thy birth.
Become, what late thou seemedst, light to earth.
Think, would thy father's sire by arms have reigned?
Or purchased heaven, were heaven by wrong obtained?
Oft hast thou listened while I praised his fate,
In life how worthy Rome, in death how great!
Who lived, in rights still equal with the rest,
In worth and service only first and best;
And died—By Heaven, forget his prosperous hour,
His last excelled all Cinna's pomp and power.

Thrice happier fate! to fall beneath the blade
Than live to sway it as that tyrant swayed.
Hail! happier thrice, the severed hands and head,
That wither, where thy grandfather's were sped,
To stain the rostra whence his genius blazed,
And shock the tribes it guided and amazed."

" The gods forbid it!" Atticus exclaimed,
Whose fears foreboded more than Tullius named—
" Yet worse than omens have my heart appalled,
Nor are those words the sole I wish recalled.
But fate you heed not, omened, or fulfilled.
Yet ah! for Rome what bulwark would you build?
What towery wall her liberty to shield,
Should Anthony who wears the faulchion wield?"

" All daring as he is he dares not thus.
Cisalpine Gaul with Decius arms for us;
To Brutus Greece with Crete has been decreed;
For Asia Cimber and Trebonius speed;
From Spain young Pompey's fleet shall rescue Rome;
Cassius has Syria: and e'en here at home
Our legions change; the Fourth deliberates still;
Yestreen the Martian camped on Alba's hill:

They need a senate to decide their choice;
That senate needs but courage and my voice."

"Are storms Brundusium threatened soothed to peace?
Who guards that gate of Italy to Greece?"

"Legions from Macedon o'erflow the walls.
But should they follow where Antonius calls,
Another's voice their overflow shall stem,
And bulwarks broad dissever Rome from them.
Strange succour springs, like fruit of grafted stock,
Light amidst waves, or fountains from a rock.
The Julian house puts forth a pledge of peace;
Octavius, born of Attia, Cæsar's niece,
Heir to his fortune and his name besides,
Though that Antonius robs and this derides;
But dowered by genius more than will or birth,
Nature and fortune vie to raise his worth;
As heaven would recompense his father's wrongs to earth.
A youth in years, in talents more than sage;
Pure from each vice, each folly of his age;
He burns with all that liberty can fire;
And courts me, loves and honours as his sire."

" I met that boy in Appollonia's school.
He seemed"—said Atticus—" of passions cool,
But ardent thought; was praised by every rank,
As mild, sage, courteous, every thing but frank.
So glows with motley plumes an eastern bird,
Deep eyed, with wing unused, and voice unheard;
Or like exotics from the south he grew,
With beauteous boughs, and foliage bright to view,
But neither fragrance shed, nor blossom shown
For pledge of fruit to grow, or flavour of it grown."

" But now"—said Tullius—" flowers and fruit are forth.
I have pledged Rome my honour for his worth.
But hold good sureties to redeem my pledge,
Those which his virtues, those his vows allege,
And those my powers to govern him attest,
And more, to watch him, and if naught arrest.
He came to promise all the crisis prayed;
Preferred mankind to kin beyond his aid;
Rebuked their clamour who revenge demand;
In amnesty to Brutus gave his hand,
Heart to the Senate, arm to Rome he gave,
And me his life, to follow mine and save.
From Capua to the hills his banners flame;
Him veterans follow, him the legions claim;

And Anthony, who sneered, begins to pale.
Give Heaven the praise, and this their bounty hail:
Who timely learns to deem our laws divine,
And shun his father's fate and cleave to mine.
Well!"—For his eyes now glancing found the slave
Who seemed just entering, sped with tidings grave—
" Well, Philo! Who inquires? I have not leisure."

" 'Tis Marcus Brutus."

" Nay, we wait his pleasure."
The bondman bowed and vanished through the screen.
But Atticus had marked his sombre mien,
His furtive eyes, and lips in humour curved:
And now half-shuddering to his lord observed—
" That slave grows sullen as he grows in years,
And hides methinks more in him than appears.
Dark streams are deep. Pray what and whence is he?
Captured, or bought, or was he born with thee?"

" Nay"—answered Tullius—" won with better thrift.
That boy ere seven years old was Cæsar's gift.
By him howe'er acquired from Syria brought,
Here cherished as my own, and better taught.

More apt to science than a bird to flight;
No mill so patient as his style to write;
To read, his tones each passion interweave,
As breezy woods or isles attuned to eve.
But ah! for reverence, love, or gratitude,
No tiger's tawny whelp has heart so rude.
Kindness he takes, as statues praise respect,
And favours, as a beast for sacrifice bedecked."

" Though great the giver"—Atticus replies—
" The gift no giver's sake should make me prize.
How featured like the pard! how coarse his hands!
I own no slaves but native of my lands;
Whence only death can drive them freed or bond:
But this ere evening darked my gates should pass beyond."

" I too"—said Tullius—" have misdoubt and fear;
Nor should the giver's power retain him here:
But who when I discard him will reclaim?
Who save from being all we fear to name?
Then let me still make worth and science known,
And show him kindness still as vainly shown,
I yet shall melt his heart and mould it to mine own."

SCENE THE FIFTH.

THE PATRIOT.

Ἅπας μὲν ἀὴρ αἰετῷ περάσιμος,
Ἅπασα δὲ χθὼν ἀνδρὶ γενναίῳ πατρίς.

Here the bold form of Brutus pierced the room:
In flower of manhood, like an oak in bloom,
Pale, justly featured, darkly haired as night,
With brow as stern, and starry eyes as bright,
His lips diffused benevolence and grace,
And truth's own traits were modelled in his face.
It beamed with worth and consciousness elate,
With that calm vigour learned by cares of state,
Patrician taste, and modesty refined,
As in the soldier and the sage combined.
Salutes exchanged, and kindliest welcome shown,
He stood, with darker eye and deeper tone,

While poured these accents, deep as torrents pour,
And dark as Rhegium's strait when winter shrouds the shore.

" Day rises fair, but storms are mustering round—
Mute skies intone—still throes convulse the ground—
Floods, floods impend, whence Rome shall ill emerge:
Antonius as a tempest rides the surge,
And all who should have stemmed the torrent join to urge.
As you foresaw, forewarned. My part is ta'en;
To leave a city I redeemed in vain,
And till with freedom never more return,
But woo her in the camp or wed her in the urn.
Fleet steeds are saddled; hillward paths surveyed;
Pretorian arms for guise and guard arrayed;
For them I quit this gown of slavish hue,
Which better serves than mine whom slaves pursue;
This morn I sally, pierce the woods ere noon,
And over Alba's mount shall meet the moon;
Beyond the shafts each foe against me bends,
Beyond the shield of weak or treacherous friends.
On heights awhile to harbour as the roe,
Warn friends, expect events, and watch the foe:
Then burst from mountains to the sea, for Greece;
And war, till tyrants sink or freemen cease.

" Thou, Atticus, whose love of all is sought,
Who hatest none, alas! not e'en the naught,
While Rome bears empire, what hast thou to fear?
Thou to each chief and every faction dear;
Hailed as a herald, welcomed as the leech,
Who heals in either camp the wounds of each;
Thy life its own sweet nature shall enshrine,
And shield in conflicts, like a cloud divine.
But death's is brighter than impends o'er thee—
Fly, Marcus Tullius, fly from Rome with me!
What canst thou here? This people are as sheep,
Who shun their watch dogs with the wolf to keep;
Beeves, that invite the yoke, endure the goad,
And love the manger more than fear the load.
Where now that senate, once supreme in worth,
Princes of Rome, and presidents of earth?
Those oaks, whose trunk no tempest could have riven,
Oaks, from whose boughs an oracle was given?
Alas! yon aspens bend to every breeze:
No beam so quivers smitten of the seas.
All false to Rome, and seeking each himself,
Some covet spoil, some tremble for their pelf,
Some hate a cause the friends of Pompey greet,
Some deem republics like themselves effete;

Others to Cæsar's heirs or ashes cling;
And e'en who loathe the kingdom lack a king.
For creeping plants, that can not tower, must twine,
And minions gather much that chiefs decline,
And slavery's bait is plenty and repose,
And liberty needs victims more of friends than foes.
Thy voice, like Cato's on Pharsalia's plain,
Peals to the dastard as the dead in vain;
Where few find talent to support thy part,
And most, who own the talent, want the heart.
And what, if every breast returned thy call,
Has not Antonius arms to pierce them all?
Behold, he comes with hordes from Tibur's hill!
Morn startled at their steel afire to kill;
With din of Syrian spears, Illyrian drums,
And Gallic hoofs deforming heaven, he comes,
Ere noon to enter walls his veterans line,
Who seek my blood, and what shall warrant thine?

" Here can I leave thee, here remaining aid,
Oh bark unarmed to pirate prows betrayed?
Unmoor with me; for Greece thy course prepare;
Partake my power, and be its guide and care.

Despond not there of freedom and the ides:
Guilt may wage war, but fortitude decides.
This commonwealth shall yet its rights regain;
But battle is the means, and Greece the plain.
Rome need not witness blood her children spill:
So Magnus willed, and we should doubly will.
With Cæsar's veterans Italy is rife,
And Greece with Pompey's panting for the strife.
Cassius shall store our camp with Asia's gold;
Young Pompey's galleys sweep the sea and hold;
Thessalia blaze with freedom's flag unfurled;
The brave and generous hail it through the world;
Till ours, like Sylla's arms, bring home success,
And, as we more deserve, abuse it less,
Bring liberty to Rome, and here proclaim
Peace without fear, and order without shame.

" Heaven has had time to weep o'er Pompey's tomb,
And needs occasion to reverse that doom,
Which shamed divine and wronged all human worth:
The Gods shall yet assert their providence on earth.
Or whatsoe'er their choice, be Cato's mine!
Who walk in wisdom's porch can ne'er repine;

There guilt is deemed the only evil done,
But exile, poverty, and death—are none."

He ceased; and Atticus had fain replied,
But that the breast of Tullius swelled with pride,
As heaves the breezy wood or billowy tide,
And thus, with glistening tears, he stretched his arm and cried.

" Go, light of Rome, thy country's sword and shield,
Incarnate truth, philosophy revealed!
All powers divine have not abandoned earth;
Some still protect the country of thy birth:
Go, Gods and men shall vie to recompense thy worth!
Who thus could see thee here, nor weep to find,
Clothed as a slave, for having freed mankind?
Their cause demands the camp thy counsels trace:
My hopes applaud it; all my plans embrace.
On no man's fortune stake the world's success:
From Greece inspire it, and if lost redress.
Go, as the nightly sun conceals his lamp,
With brighter morn, relumine Pompey's camp,
Mount from the east the heavenly path he trod,
Free Rome, save man, and vindicate the God!

" Yet leave me here to serve the same design,
By other arts, and—ah how poor to thine!
But what should I in camps or combats? No.
Here is the post I never must forego.
Not that I hope, where Brutus lost, defence,
Or covet life, if his be banished hence:
But different duties different scenes enforce,
Greece for your arms, and Rome for my discourse.
Senates still hail it, still the Forum claims,—
And what applause for Brutus cheered his games!
Though else too just the chastisement you urge,
Believe there are, who least deserve its scourge;
Few, but enough in number, or in nerve,
To rise and crush the creatures that deserve.
Still round these hills a conquering spirit lurks.
Seven hundred years of godlike thoughts and works,
In shadowy pageants gleam to Roman eyes;
As columns, towers, and bannered hosts, they rise:
By fount and fane the dim procession looms,
By palmy gates, long avenues of tombs,
By altar, trophy, obelisk, and arch,
With spoil and victims led, in meteor march,
O'er laurelled paths, colossal chariots rove,
And starred with glory climb the Capitol to Jove.

Still noble bosoms burn to swell the train;
Burn to burst up like Titans from their chain;
And need but summons, which 'tis mine to sound,
Till hills re-echo it, and heavens rebound.

" Power swells my breast too proudly to despond,
Hope beyond power, and courage hope beyond.
Let arms and Anthony confound the sky!
Hither I came to brave him, not to fly:
Alone—unarmed—I wait to brave him and defy.
Count not his faction or his force too strong.
Octavius parts them; him the veterans throng:
Our legions pause; some mock the Consul's will;
They need but hear the senate's to fulfil:
Nay, whom they serve, is all they need discern;
Rome needs but know him to abhor and spurn.
And, by the Gods, let Anthony beware,
Lest, for this life which scarce deserves my care,
His fame encounter what no arms can let,
No grave conceal, no future age forget!
Lest my tongue scath him with a brand so wide,
Mankind shall sever from his camp and side,
Shame like his shadow chase him, scorn deride,
Hatred hiss after him, and execration stride,

As one devote to infamy, as one to hell allied.
Old am I ?—aye, and ill: but helpless?—no!
Thought kindles still beneath these locks of snow,
And burning words like flame, like Phlegethon, shall flow,
Shall vindicate my country's right, shall wither up its foe,
Shall blaze at once my glory and his shame,
And consecrate as signs to all succeeding fame."

He spoke with arm elate, and stormy frown;
Pale to his couch while Atticus sank down.
Brutus replied, with hands still folded in his gown.
" Be that, as thy design, and Fate's, decree!
Such vast resolves, so worthy Rome and thee,
Vain and presumptuous were my wish to bend:
The Gods admire them; oh may Fate befriend!
Yet own, the proud career thy thoughts enforce,
The fame, which warrants and illumes that course,
The nerve to dare it, and the power to run,
Are radiant cycles, rare beneath the sun:
Are thine, by nature, art, and fortune made;
Thine only; none partake them, none can aid.
Then, since thy sanction gilds the arms I dare,
Which thou in youth had'st bounded forth to share,
Bethink thee, youth must still for glory burn—
Come, arm thy son, to follow it and earn,

Where Rome shall welcome him, mankind discern,
And I conduct whence none inglorious can return."

" My son! Ah, Brutus, said'st thou so? My son!
I'm old, ill, desolate, and have but one.
What! tear that stripling from the parent's shade?
That only prop whereon my strength is stayed,
The light which gilds this welkin, else how dun!
My youth restored, my life to come, my son!
Whose sparkling brow, light step, and jocund tone,
Reflect o'er mine the only cheer they own:
All life has left to cherish or endear,
Watch o'er my bed, or weep above my bier.
Oh Brutus! death, that claimed my daughter's corse,
A world's ingratitude, a wife's divorce,
Age that deforms me, passions that dispart,
Were all less ruthless than thy stoic's heart.
By heaven! the mist dissolves; my fate is read!
I see the abyss whose precipice I tread.
Where Marcus Brutus has forecast my doom,
Nor deems that old man's carcass worth a tomb,
Who deigns thus childless in the world to dwell,
Till thankless slaves, that mock him, please to sell.

Nay, Atticus, these pangs are ill beguiled:
Thy friends are many, mine an only child.
Give grief, give tears, a momentary way,
Till reason, or till pride, resume its sway.

Fools only slay the sire and spare the boy!
Antonius knows that saw and would employ.
Brutus was right: what matters where I fall?
The cross my bier, or Tiber's wave my pall?
Rome, Rome demands a holocaust of all!—
Ho! Philo, call my son, my darling Marcus call!
Had I nine others, ten should march with Brutus from my hall.
This doting soul reclaims her pride and nerve.
Rome shall have all, aye all, without reserve!
Pardon, oh Brutus! pardon me these throes,
That shake the little power my reason owes:
I lose my own respect in wronging thine.
But ah! this brain endures—what few divine.
Time and disease have half subdued my frame,
And kindred furies struck my mind as maim.
Here come the amends. That step with armour jars!
What, Marcus? Ha! already plumed, like Mars!

SCENE THE SIXTH.

THE SIRE AND SON.

Βούλομαι δὲ σοι, τέκνον,
(Φρονεῖς γὰρ ἤδη κἀποσώσαις ἂν πατρὸς
Γνώμας φράσαντος, ἄν θάνω) παραινέσαι
Κειμήλι' ἐσθλὰ, καὶ νέοισι χρήσιμα.

Of cheeks scarce fledged, but manly mien and height,
He came, with brand and brigandine bedight;
With helm of snowy plumes his head was mailed,
Each cuish, each armlet, like a serpent scaled:
Red graven gems the silver greaves comprest;
A girdle graced his loins, a belt his chest;
Whence bright his scabbard swung, with martial din,
And clashed to measure, as the youth came in.

From face to face bright glances flashed the truth,
Caught from the blush and conscious smile of youth.
"So"—cried the Sire—"speed plots by patriots weaved!
Ere dared well counselled, and ere told achieved!"

Then grave, as Brutus for departure moved,
Embraced the Son, his starting tears reproved,
Stilled with a frown the suppliant's fond endeavour
From duty's post its sentinel to sever,
And kissed the boy's fair brow, and bade farewell for ever.

" I, who begot and educated thee,
Not for thyself, still less, dear youth, for me,
But for mankind and Rome, whene'er they ask,
To do or die, dismiss thee to thy task.
Eaglet, with talons strong and pinions good,
Launched from its eyrie o'er the mountain wood,
To buffet winds, and baffle waves, for food,
And wrestle with the wolf, and rend the dragon's brood.
Fatigue, want, wounds, whatever pains or kills,
What vulgar minds or vicious take for ills,
Thou ne'er wast taught to dread, nor taught like them
To prize in fortune aught the sage contemn.
Go now, go prove those lessons of thy youth!
If ever thou hast loved or learned their truth,
Go, where thy country calls thee, freedom needs,
And fame shall follow, go where Brutus leads!
Mindful—what rights are staked, what wrongs begun,
Whose chains have shivered, whose mankind must shun,
Whose citizen thou art, whose soldier, and whose Son.

Of bright examples has our house a dearth?
Lo! all that ever beamed sublime on earth
Are thine by precept, title more than birth!
From them thy soul descends; go, emulate their worth.
Permit events to destiny's dark loom:
Care thou for only what discomfits doom;
Nor more let war's than thunder's cloudy womb,
Nor death's, nor hell's, disturb thy brow with gloom;
But hail them as a bride in beauty's bloom,
And guard thine honour like a faithful groom,
Nor envy guilt its throne, but cleave to virtue in the tomb.

"Yet Mars, methinks, may peril less thy worth,
With all his followers, exile, pest, and dearth,
Than blandishments the Syren peace shall find,
To taint thy youth, and enervate thy mind.
For though I see—by omens sent from hell,
And, worse, by presages that inly swell,
And shade the approach of evil they impel;
That dim presentiment of fate, whose spell
Weaves subtlest links no logic can excel,
Too fine to scan, too manifold to tell,
Too intricate to trace, too certain to refel,
And thence diviner deemed; by these although I know too well,

The lists I enter are to death devote,
Whose sword is ground, is girded, for my throat,
Leashed as a blood-hound at the Consul's hip,
And nestling in his hand the leash to slip:—
I mock it and will meet—By heaven I carry
A sharper tongue, with passes worse to parry.
But though Antonius spurn my head as stone,
Whate'er he aims at thine shall whelm his own.
Yes thou, my shade removed, shalt doubly thrive;
Shalt all, and I in thee shall half, survive.
Thy roots shall strengthen by his grave, and mine,
And thy top flourish, as a mountain pine.
For heaven is just; these ruthless wars shall cease;
Rome rule the world, and thou enjoy in peace.
But ah! what snares shall then beset thy road;
More than I can forewarn, or dare forebode.
Yet take this signal, as a starry pole,
As noonstead, take this seamark to thy soul;
And oh! if e'er death's warning seemed divine,
If ere a Father's last command, hear mine—
To injure man in person, fame, or pelf,
Wrest or withhold another's for thyself,
Will more wrong nature, more her laws offend,
More counteract thy being's cause and end,

Than want, than banishment, than pain, than death,
Than aught that can afflict thy fortune or thy breath.
With this, of all things I can give or tell,
My last best boon, best blessing, fare thee well."

No tear, no sigh, no sign of sorrow broke.
So swelled all bosoms with the power he spoke.
Conscious 'twas Brutus that o'erlooked the scene,
All glowed with wisdom high o'er thoughts terrene,
As if upborne from earth, and magnified in mien.
The Sire and Son embracing reached the door,
There kissed, then parted, and thence met no more.

Ὦ παῖ, γένοιο πατρὸς εὐτυχέστερος,
Τἀ δ' ἄλλ' ὅμοιος.

ACT II.

SCENE THE FIRST.

THE MATRON.

Αἰεί τοι κραδίη, πέλεκυς ὥς, ἐστὶν ἀτειρὴς,
Ὅστ' ἴεισιν διὰ δουρὸς, ὑπ' ἀνέρος, ὅς ῥά τε τέχνῃ
Νήϊον ἐκτάμνῃσιν, ὀφέλλει δ' ἀνδρὸς ἐρωήν.

Morn on the mount the sun's pavilion raised,
In gorgeous folds, where gold and crimson blazed;
And forth the giant orb fares up the sky:
Light zephyrs curb their silver cars on high,
And Rome exults, in terraces and trees,
To hymn the God, and incense with the breeze.
For toil man issues, to return at dark.
Crowds thicken; cries intone—Beware! for, hark!
Blows smite the porch of Cicero's abode;
The brazen valves flung outward sweep the road;
And bounding forth a warrior reins his barb:
On foot a follower stalks in servile garb.

Through devious ways, of gazers heedless still,
They shun the Forum, climb the Cælian hill,
Thread a small arch and pathway walls enclose,
And upward wind, till barrier gates oppose.
A mastiff barks—steeds whinny—weapons din;
The wicket opes, gates yawn, and close the comers in.

Wide spread the court, and galleries hemmed the square.
Twelve horsemen, armed like him who came, were there.
Whose follower dashed his slavish garb aside,
And springing forward seized a sword, and cried—
" But this discerns its bearer from a slave.
Gird thou my side, which only thou canst save.
To arms! and bid yon folded banner wave,
Woe to the tyrant, freedom to the brave!
My home is hence the camp, my refuge thence the grave.
Well sped, twelve gallant hearts! Eight others rest;
And household cares within distract my breast:
I haste to soothe their sympathies and fears.
Thou, Marcus, call me, when our eighth appears."

With head uncovered, else in armour braced,
Down the broad hall his steps resounding paced,

Reached the chief court, passed half its columns round,
By niches, whence his great forefathers frowned,
Where tessellated groups the pavement wreathed,
His hearth burned incense and his Lares breathed.
These he adored, then turned to Portia's bower.
There cloistered fountains wept on shrub and flower,
Pale willows sobbed, and melody complained
In chaunted verse, whose close a lyre sustained.
While Portia limned, and maidens sighed to tell,
How Troy's defender bade his bride farewell.

On ebon bench her task the matron plied.
In whom each muse, each grace, with nature vied,
Vied to reveal some model for her kind,
And charm all hearts, by manners, mien and mind.
Her downcast eyes their long black lashes showed,
And brow, how dark, how delicately bowed!
Yet stern her gaze, as hymns to Dian made,
And deeply calm, as summer's sea embayed:
No dimple marked nor colour tinged her cheek,
'Till ruby lips unveiled her teeth to speak,
When dark eyes flashed with thought dilate and warm,
And light seemed radiant from her face and form.

From flame within as pictured vases shine,
Or glowed Pygmalion's stone with life divine:
Sunbursts of soul seemed emanating there,
Subdued, yet dowered to suffer and to dare.
White was her stole, with purple border graced,
With band of purple girt around her waist,
And clasped with rubies o'er her shoulders fair;
Which caught from pearly wreaths her raven hair.
On mats two maidens couched, in dusky stole;
One swept the strings, one chaunted from a scroll.
While young Calphurnius gazed behind her arm,
To learn her art, and marvel at its charm:
Born to the lord her mother's choice approved,
Though Brutus sued, when death that lord removed
Her sire annulled the mother's last commands,
And second nuptials bound both hearts and hands.

But Brutus entering caught the last adieu
Her hand was bodying forth to shape and hue,
And cried—"Such omens may the Gods redeem!
Ah maidens! cease the song, or change the theme,
For lines that nerve the bosom these relax:
Sing—Be my heart the indomitable axe,

Keen-edged, bright-burnished, and of temper good,
Heaved in a shipwright's hand to pierce the wood,
And make the oak yokefellow with the winds,
To traverse seas, and make the world mankind's."

But Portia rose and clasped her husband's breast.
" It was this silly boy's ill-timed request:
But neither melts my heart, nor thine alarms,
Whose one best omen is our country's arms.
Rome's eagle soars to freedom's hold, the hills;
Oh happiest augury that e'er fate fulfils!"

" I follow: and 'tis time. We part—farewell.
Where we shall meet hereafter, none can tell.
But meet we shall: let fate decide, my love,
Whether on earth, beneath it, or above.
Could we two question bliss with duty lives,
Or own one woe save that dishonour gives;
Life had no joy for either reft apart,
Nor death a bitterer pang than rives our heart.
For thy sweet presence fills my soul's desire:
And oh thy heart was ever like a lyre,
Which, wound and wielded in a master's arms,
Gives thought new language, and discourse new charms,

Responds each impulse that his soul bestows,
Refines his pleasures, and consoles his woes.
But chief I love the strain most needed now,
That makes my mind the image of thy brow,
Sublime to tower through shadows, as the morn,
To tread as flowers on virtue's path of thorn,
For honour brave the wreck of earth and sea,
And immolate for Rome myself and thee."

" Else wert thou wanting to the name thou bearest,
Fame thou hast won, and enterprise thou darest;
And I to Grecian lore, and Roman pride,
My father's daughter, and my husband's bride.
Stay! much remains to question and request:
I wist not parting could so wring my breast."

" But thy maids know, and boy begins to learn.
Your tears must hence! in fitter place to yearn.
Stepson, kiss first, and hear my parting prayer—
The Gods have blessed thee in thy mother's care;
Obey her counsels, imitate her mind,
And live beloved of heaven and humankind.
Go, lest we forfeit strength our hearts assume:
All bosoms have their throes, and eyes their rheum.

What traits, O Portia, in his face combine!
Mysterious image of thy fate and mine!
There love's first blossom and its blight are met:
All memory hoards, and all it would forget.
What! has my stepsire's part been coldly done?"

"No father e'er so spoiled an only son.
O Brutus, love blooms often, like the wheat;
As Ceres still with Venus needs compete:
When adverse parents, like the freezing north,
Nip the young bud, a timelier blossoms forth.
Yet I bewail, ah not our selfish fate,
Whose love lacks nothing, but for Rome's estate!
And man's! to whom no type of thee descends,
No form of all thine own so nobly blends,
Nought to revive examples thou hast shown,
And bid new eras emulate thine own.
But all thy worth must perish with its frame,
Save what frail arts or letters may proclaim,
Which while they wrong thee give their author half thy fame."

"Lament not that, till Rome and man be proved;
Our race superfluous grown were best removed.

But moments urge. Once more, sweet wife, adieu!
Thy dangers here 'twere vain to hide or rue:
Arms compass thee, yet friends are nigh to love,
Ours, Rome's, and virtue's, and the Gods above.
Console thy grief with memory of the past,
That sunbright summer never cloud o'ercast,
With hope of future hours as brightly shined,
Care of thy infant, culture of thy mind,
Pride in my glory, zeal for freedom's course,
And fortitude to bear whatever fate enforce.
My soul shall hover like a genius near,
In letters oft, in love forever, here."

"Write every day—no—write when rest allows:
Each duty done, bethink thee of thy spouse!
Let us have moments when our thoughts may meet:
Be it when day and silent evening greet,
When the broad sun descends to earth's embrace,
Or paly moon climbs up to catch his face.
Till then adieu! For me ne'er feel alarm:
I bear within a more than magic charm,
A power, that stands between my soul and harm,
Far readier, mightier far, than any despot's arm:

Mightier than hosts below or Gods above,
And uncorrupted as my husband's love:
Power hence to vanish as a ghostly shape,
Bid darkness hide me, earth beneath me gape,
Or sunward as a mist exhaled to heaven escape.
'Twas thence I sprung; 'tis thither I aspire.
To bar me whence should feeble friends require,
When Gods betray thee—yonder hearth has fire,
Unquenched, as burns in me the example of my sire.
Go now, with faulchion drawn, and flag unfurled,
In freedom's sacred name, light up the world!
Let broad earth reel beneath thine army's tramp,
In dust the despots and their throne to stamp;
Leave me as ashes which their blood may damp;
I know the matron's stole can ne'er become the camp:
But should fate prove unequal to thy worth,
Should who adorns and freed be driven from earth,
Or shouldst thou deem thy race superfluous here,
And fly this thankless and degenerate sphere;
Think not to leave me then as now behind!
Me in this lonely prison of the mind,
This caverned forge, this workhouse of mankind,
Where bondmen fashion gyves each other's feet to bind,
And noon were blacker to the brave than midnight to the blind!

No—I will follow, and o'ertake thy flight:
If duty part us, death shall reunite;
Thy camp I must forego, thy tombstone is my right.
The world thou spurnest I shall speed to spurn;
Nor ask it favour more than means to burn,
And homeward to my native heaven return,
Or feed and grow a willow tree to weep above thine urn."

"Hark! Footsteps come my summons hence to tell.
Thou best of all that humankind excel,
Oh virtue's self, embodied by some spell
In woman's form with loveliness to dwell,
One last caress—last kiss—farewell—farewell!"

"Farewell."

She stood, with stifled voice, but brow elate,
Devouring inward tears, and braving fate:
Gazed, till his form revertless past the arch,
His shadow following, listened to his march,
Till footsteps failed her ear's her fancy's power,
Then turning viewed her lone and silent bower:
With breast undaunted still, and eyes undimmed,
Till their glance rested on the scene she limned;

Where Hector gave Andromache his child,
While she its father eyeing wept and smiled.
These woes, reflecting Portia's, brimmed their tide,
These, which one solace soothed to her denied.
Gasping for breath, as sobs an infant lost,
With bloodshot face, and bosom tempest tost,
As sinks the steed beneath new burthens bowed,
She sunk, hid prone her face, and wept aloud:
As showers the rain when lightning rends the cloud:
Till shrieks she seemed resolved to stifle in her shroud
Pierced to her slaves. As lows the wind around some castle proud,
Whose lord hears winter's night his faith upbraid,
In moans that burst the bosom of a maid,
Whom he beguiled to shame, and shame to death betrayed.
Or as when tempests chase the pirate's deck,
Whose shrouds all shriek at surges threatening wreck,
Heart-piercing cries come o'er the billowy bank,
From victims doomed to walk a toppling plank,
Or chained for launching to an anchor's shank,
Or who, cast out where sharks were watching, sank,
While upward curled a gurgling wave with blood in bubbles rank.

SCENE THE SECOND.

THE GATES.

Ceu quondam nivei liquida inter nubila cycni,
Quum sese e pastu referunt, et longa canoros
Dant per colla modos; sonat amnis, et Asia longe
Pulsa palus.

Brutus through cloisters to the court returned;
Where steeds in order stamped, and armour burned.
Slaves curbed his horse with housings rich illumed:
He vaulted thither helmeted and plumed.
Forth flashed his sword: all others spurn their sheath.
Each startling charger bounds the curb beneath;
Their fiery nostrils roll, and champ their foamy teeth.
"For Rome!"—he cries—"Let all who wish her free,
And dare achieve it, forth, and follow me!
Watchwords are bought, yet wards our course may stem;
Who sold them to us may sell us to them:
Yon gate is bribed, yet arms our course may thrall;
Then charge, charge hillward, nor regard who fall!

Charge as the winds! yet first my signal note—
This faulchion reeking from the sentry's throat."

Down the strait lane they followed, filing fleet;
Thence formed in five quaternions swept the street.
Neighed trampling steeds, flashed helmet, sword and shield,
Plumes swayed, the banner streamed, a trumpet pealed;
Earth kindled at their feet: they sped, they wheeled;
Till towers in front the high Flaminian gate revealed.
A single arch the Dorian frieze sustained;
O'er which an Attic, graced with Caryans, reigned;
In either pier a conqueror's statue frowned,
By columns twain, with graven trophies crowned.
A watch tower's ward discerned the coming tide,
And called—" To arms!" Beneath a trump replied.
Spearmen as hornets swarming formed in ranks,
Twelve troopers leaped to horse, and closed the flanks.
Forward the sentry strode with spear in air,
And midway stood, and challenged—" Who come there!"
His glistening lance full levelled for assault.
The coming leader called his troop to halt:
And, sole advancing, answered each demand—
" Pretorians of the First."—" Pretorians, stand!

The word?" "*Revenge!*"—"The countersign?" "*Ere night.*"
"Pass out!"—He yielded way with spear upright:
The challenged crying, toward his troop reversed,
"Forward and pass, Pretorians of the First!"
In serried ranks they issue calm and mute;
With wavy swords return the guard's salute,
And out resume their speed, redouble soon;
Are lost in dust: were hid in woods by noon;
And o'er the Alban mount that evening hailed the moon.

Meanwhile a host came up, in martial state,
By Tibur's road, and sought the Nævian gate.
The Nævian gate, which towers gigantic flanked,
Where art's fair orders stage on stage were ranked:
The first a lofty square of Tuscan frowned;
Three rose hexagonal; the fifth was round:
Dorian pilasters decked the three between;
Circling the fifth a colonnade was seen;
Acanthus o'er its chaptels curved a wreath;
Acanthus crowned the pillared gate beneath,—
Of various stones from subject earth amassed;
Of three arcades, the central high and vast:
Within, each vault with bossy flowers was graced:
Without, each front four lofty columns faced:

An attic's frieze o'er four pilasters reigned;
And covering each stood kings in marble chained;
One o'er each pillar wept his realm betrayed;
As panels graven in relief displayed,
And round medallions twain above each less arcade.
Conquest and fame on high their wings unfurled,
Six horses, like the sun's, a chariot whirled,
And Rome, like Pallas armed, in triumph awed the world.

On rolled the dusty cloud from Tibur urged:
Steel glistened near; the foremost horse emerged.
A sudden breeze unveils their bannered line.
Three thousand spears o'er helm and buckler shine;
And sheathed in mail a thousand warriors ride,
By tens, with swords of flame, and crests of pride.
White plumes seem floating down the wavy course,
As floats the foam o'er rivers from the force.
While music bold exhaling filled the morn,
And power pealed high from clarion, trump, and horn,
To rouse the dead whose tombs the bordered road adorn.

In brass, with sunbeat shields, pretorians led,
On chargers dark as night, with housings red.

Quires, robed in white, with pipe and shell, swept by.
Twelve lictors next, with fasces raised on high,
On foot, by pairs, in azure tunics drest.
On foot, three scribes, bareheaded, marched abreast.
Then, high on horse majestic as a throne,
And gemmed as Perseus in the starry zone,
In silver mail the Consul rode alone.
A crimson cloak behind his shoulders rolled,
With purple edged, and clasped in front with gold.
All whom he meets from car and steed descend:
All seated rise, all bare the head and bend.
Him legates, tribunes, quæstors, friends pursue;
In arms or gowns, each ranked in order due.
Squadrons succeed that guard the battle's right.
Next, light armed foot, the dew-drops of the fight.
Next, with its thunderbolts, an eagle soared,
Whose flight three cohorts followed and adored.
With scowls, that imaged many a stormy field,
With bosoms seamed, and heart to slaughter steeled,
With stride gigantic rank on rank they wheeled.
Bowmen were marshalled near, with quivers graced:
Slingers with peltry clad, as tigers, paced:
The legions left rode last, in scaly armour cased.

" Halt, halt!"—For challenge peals, with answer heard—
" Marcus Antonius Consul, and the Third!
Ere night his countersign—*Revenge* his word!"
With proffered arms the portal's guard reply,
With flag submiss, and clarions sounding high.
" Forward, the Third!" They pierce the central arch;
When minstrels loud struck up the Julian march.
Horsemen and foot all startle at the sound;
Spears bristle; springier footsteps spurn the ground;
Steeds curve the glossy neck, and press the rein,
With forward ears, high hoof, and bounding mane:
Each bosom throbbed to verse the air respired,
Till every voice burst forth, and full in chorus quired—
" Rise, Julian star, that kindlest as the moon
O'er lesser lights, and blaze till night be noon!"
Their bucklers clanged; their pæan pealed to heaven.
Rome thrilled through all her streets and mountains seven.
Paled Cæsar's foes, and shrunk their bowers within;
His friends looked forth, and sallying swelled the din.
Onward the quiring legion hold their path,
By circus, fane, basilica, and bath,
Wheel where the sacred way in marble smiles,
With leafy planes, bright roofs, and pillared piles;

Wheel through the Forum hemmed with vast arcades
And high o'erhung by domes and colonnades;
Wheel up mount Palatine through towers elate,
And bear the Consul to his golden gate.
There left for guard the choicest of their host,
Thence broke, and marched, each cohort to its post.

SCENE THE THIRD.

FULVIA.

Δειναὶ μὲν ὀργαὶ κυμάτων θαλασσίων,
Δειναὶ δὲ ποταμῶν, καὶ πυρὸς θερμαὶ πνοαὶ,
Δεινὸν δὲ πενία, δεινὰ δ' ἄλλα μυρία,
Ἀλλ' οὐδὲν οὕτω δεινόν, ὡς γυνὴ κακὴ.

Antonius pierced the porch, through fasces lowered;
And followers filled his hall with marble floored.
Him white robed nobles meet and welcome home;
O'er tall arcades where columns reared a dome,
Whose centre opening mixed with heaven above,
And frescoes fabled of celestial love.
Beneath, as if, like Jove at Danae's bower,
Some God's descent had strown a golden shower,
Coins stacked on coins o'er quaint mosaics tower,
As mowers heap their hay when clouds in harvest lower.

" What mean these treasures broad and lofty piled?"
Antonius asked. His steward bowed and smiled—
" Your gift to Lælius!"—" Ha, beshrew thy thrift!
The heap thus scanned seems little for a gift.
Add thrice the sum, and cart it hence!"—he cries,
And left the hall to laughter and surprise.
Sergius and Varius forth pursued his beckoning eyes.

Him Fulvia waited, in her bower withdrawn;
Whose proud piazza joined the garden's lawn,
With piers of gems inlaid and ivory sawn,
And garniture of gold, and tapestry like the dawn.
Listening she rose—august of height and mould,
With sun-bright eyes, and eyebrows straight and bold;
Of faultless favour, forehead broad and brent,
And mouth arched sharply as a bow unbent;
In amber robe, with clasp and collar gemmed,
And golden hair wreathed high in braids as diademed.
But though her smile could fascinate the sight,
Voice charm the ear, and wit the soul delight,
Though skilled high arts of loom and lyre to use,
Imbued in letters, cherished by the muse,
And born to bend all fortunes to her own,
And dowered with grace to illustrate a throne;

Withal traits mixed of passions ill restrained,
Too early tasted, and too deeply drained:
Where love had lived but fled ere youth away,
And lust, that later lurked, had lost its sway,
'Till powers no limit checked, no license cloyed,
Ambition, pride, and vengeance filled the void.
Yet courage high and vigour marked her air,
The elastic bough and bouyant surge were there,
Luxuriant summer's bloom, and noon's refulgent glare.

Her virgin heart in stealth for Tullius burned;
Fired by his graces and the fame they earned.
So fired, she stole from home, by night, disguised,
His palace pierced, his solitude surprised,
Unveiled her face, as clouds reveal the moon,
Avowed her name, her passion, and its boon,
And sunk upon his feet, as smitten with a swoon.
Rapt to the heart he raised her breathless form,
Rapt with her passions while he stemmed the storm,
Gazing on cheeks that mocked the peach mature,
On lips where grace respired with love's allure,
On breasts that heaved again with sighs intense,
And large eyes wakened to returning sense.

" Oh lovely flower that bravest winter's clime,
Thou pretty bird so fain to perch in lime,
Poor lamb that wanderest where but wolves retire,
A gold fish at the hook, or moth the fire!
Not flames, that scorch the insect they entice,
Nor frost, that turns the blossom's dew to ice,
Nor wolf's nor fisher's fang, nor fowler's toil,
Destroy like man when woman is his spoil.
Formed as thou art for every grace and bliss,
How should'st thou know the path to shame's abyss?
Or who could meet nor rescue thee from this?
I love thee better than to harm. Return!
This heart shall guard thy secret to mine urn.
Go, bless some youth who merits what thou art!
Aspire to all that nature made thy part!
The daughter's duty, and the spouse's truth,
And mother's empire. Ah, be wise in youth!
There is no pleasure like the tranquil soul;
No self-indulgence charms like self-control.
Think not Heaven orders such unjust returns,
As giving vice the meed that virtue earns."
He said: and soothed her sorrows, screened her fame,
And homeward led her purer than she came.

But fruit that banes is born of fairest flowers;
The malmsey's must too far fermented sours;
A tear rusts mirrors where unwiped it clings;
And honied hives self-eaten teem with stings:
So woman's love neglected turns to hate,
Interminate as hell, implacable as fate.
Thence Fulvia's friends were foes who Tullius vexed:
She wedded Clodius first, and Curio next;
Antonius third a prouder suit enforced:
And fled for her from Cytheris divorced:
For whom Antonia's yoke (his first) was riven,
And whom he wooed for wealth himself had given,
And left for squandering his e'en more than hers had thriven.
Then Fulvia swayed his house, supreme in trust,
And swayed his passions all but dice and lust;
And, as for prey the serpent scales a holm,
She twined round him to sovereignty in Rome;
In camp with sword and plumy helmet rode,
Led legions, levied wars, and truce bestowed;
And rose to empire's height from humblest birth,
From grandchild of a slave to arbitress of earth.
And now her listening ears his step devour,
Through court and corridor, from hall to bower:

Her eyes dilate; her hands are proffered fain,
And greet him entering with his followers twain.

" Hail, who hast come with destinies to deal!
How leaped my heart to hear their clarion peal!
Come, armed for vengeance human and divine,
Whose pæan riots through my veins like wine;
Come, as beseems thy rank, thy race behoves,
Consul of Rome, Alcides' son and Jove's:
To sweep assassins from the earth they stain,
Reseize the rod their victim spared in vain,
Scare dotard senates, scourge the dastard throngs,
And still the wretch that babbles of their wrongs:
That bird obscene who waits till vultures prey,
To insult o'er quarry he could ne'er purvey;
As though the lion died for daws to clang,
And Cæsar fell that Tullius might harangue.

" Ye, whom his voice, like yon morasses' breath,
Beguiled to slumbers that betrayed to death,
Whom now the mongrel flattered, now assailed,
Gnashed when he dared, and slavered when he quailed;
Ye, with whose blood his braggart lips are brim,
Ye, whom he ne'er forgave for pardoning him,

But loathed in life, and outraged on the bier;
Oh Julius, Clodius, Lentulus, be near!
For vengeance long dissembled dares the light,
And clamours as a noontide storm to smite.

" Or needs Antonius cause to goad his hate?
Or hopes he better than his stepsire's fate?
For Clodius had a grave—whose blood was poured
To dew the dust on roads his fathers floored;
But Lentulus hung down the felon stairs,
Till scarce thy mother bribed Terentia's prayers,
When Cataline's intrigues were made a noose
To throttle every foe her lord would lose.
Or can that juggler's prate thy heart cajole?
Can words, that taint our speech, corrupt thy soul?
Has phrase the assassins who usurp contemn
Seduced thy reason and transferred to them?
And Greece with *amnesty* made Rome amends
For empire lost, and thee for murdered friends?
There is, whose spirit teems with different leaven.
These hands—hear, Julius, from thy star in heaven!
Clodius, and Lentulus, attest in hell!—
These hands shall grasp the dagger all repel:

Though Gods and men abandon you, I rest;
And, as the daily sun pursues the west,
Will follow your revenge, nor spare nor turn,
Till each assassin's head is mine to spurn."
She paled, she stamped, with voice as torrents run,
With eyes that flashed as mirrors to the sun,
With arms as earth were opening at her feet,
And face the dying and the dead to greet.
Struck with her rage their chief his followers eyed,
And kindling with the omen thus replied.

" Fulvia, why chide a car whose coursers fume?
Why summon wind to forests fires consume?
Tempt hunger to repasts beyond its gripe?
Or urge the winepress ere the grapes be ripe?
The tiger nursed in blood may mew for milk,
Wolves balk their famished young, or eagles bilk,
A trodden serpent lick the sandal's dirt,
Ere I forget a friend's or foe's desert.
No—though I crouch in covert, watch the hour,
And mete my space, ere bounding to devour,
Deem not oblivion makes my ambush dumb!
But once in reach let yonder bisons come—

Though the bull bellow through the herd I plunge,
To eviscerate his heart, and wring it as a spunge.
But higher fates than his in Tullius vest;
The blow that crushes him must stun the rest.
I come to strike it. Dread events begin.
I need the senate's aid, and come to win;
Come armed alike for conflict or discourse:
I need the senate, and must win, or force.
Far lie for us Brundusium's legions three:
Upstart Octavius severs them from me;
In arms for Cæsar's will, forsooth his pelf,
To serve, he says, the senate, means himself.
But his march hither they alone can stem.
One, the third legion, I have bribed from them:
The fourth, and Martian, camped on Alba's height,
Yet wait the senate's will, which I must write."

" Whose rank but thine, O Consul, should prescribe,
Birth claim it, arms enforce, or treasure bribe?
What, doubt that senate, void of worth and nerve!
Inured to bondage, reckless whom they serve;
Whose hearts are wan and withered as their face,
Whose youth's illusions fled before its grace,

Whose oaths are common as a wanton's charms,
And counsels hired as gladiatorial arms.
Why, since the assassins fled the light they fouled,
What muzzled dogs so dumb, till Tullius howled?
Have they not bowed, as corn when autumn blows?
Made Cæsar's edicts law, made thine as those?
Carved out Campania for thy veterans' farms?
Seen nor presumed to chide thee fenced with arms?
In fine, laid earth beneath thine axe and rods,
And, more, from earth raised Cæsar to the Gods?
By Jove, thou dread'st that jackal's frothy jaws,
That parrot pranked in scorn and self-applause!
Who speaks by rote, by rote can ill respond,
And scared by arms forgets the speech he conned."

" Nay, Fulvia, but he voices power to dread;
The great have shunned it, and who dared are dead.
A power to cleave mens souls, infuse his own,
Revolt their blood, their intellect dethrone,
Till every cheek a rebel standard bears,
And tears proclaim men's hearts no longer theirs.
When rising like a snake o'er many a spire,
With throat, chimera like, that vomits fire;

As lows a lion till the hills would flee,
As peals a cloud emerging dark at sea;
With heaving arm, as ocean's surge is lift,
And sway, like earth's when mountain tops are rift;
He whelms, he withers, more than flame or flood,
And deals his shafts afar, and feathers each in blood.
Such as transfixed Cethegus dumb with shame,
When Cataline in ruin quenched his flame,
And Lentulus, my father, trembled pale,
Till, like an ox for slaughter, dragged to jail,
And down the groaning step stones headlong cast,
With broken neck, bloat face, and eyes aghast.
Yet, oh great heart! whose fate the Sybils sold,
Thou third Cornelian prince in vain foretold,
Are vows for vengeance a soothsayer's songs?
Or have I slumbered and forgot thy wrongs?
No—they shall dog thy hangman's head till spurned
As is a wolf's, the vermin's bounty earned.
When least he fears, where last believes I dare,
With arms he boasts are only his to bear,
Torn from his camp, I come with quiver brim,
And shafts athirst to quench their barbs in him:
Him, though his tongue be ruin's, fire his breath,
And all his thoughts as adders fanged with death."

" Why, I have seen this rhetoric-master storm,
Where no such power, Antonius, graced his form,
When Milo paid my husband's blood its due,
Ere murder dared what Rome dares not pursue.
Attired in white that homicide came down,
Scorn on his lips, defiance in his frown,
And bore his orator, where troops convened,
Lest arms should fright him, in a litter screened.
Whence issuing, when he caught their gleam and sound,
From heights with colonnades and porches crowned,
Ye Gods!—the dove beneath an eagle's swoop,
The tethered calf that tempts a wolfish troop,
The child that gapes where cliffs o'er toppling swim,
The uncarted fawn, were lion-like to him.
At the first shout the accusing benches swelled,
He quailed, he shrunk, by Milo scarce upheld;
Pale as his garment, feebler than his cause,
With throat convulsed, dry lips, and gibbering jaws,
Tossed, as a wherry drifts by wind and wave,
Heard, as a swimmer shrieks where none can save,
He stammered words that banished whom they balked,
Then fled, to pen them as he ne'er had talked.

" But I have heard a soldier's speech. It burst
From heart to heart, as pedant's never durst:

Sublime o'er rules; no forms of common place,
No arts of laboured phrase or studied grace;
But stern his gesture, as a sword unsheathed;
His voice, a clarion's, deep for battle breathed;
Words few, but such as rived the oaks of Jove,
And planted fire in every breast they clove.
Simply he stood, where hung the bloody robe
By cold remains that late o'erawed the globe,
And read what records told of service done,
Realms conquered, office held, and triumphs won,
Honours decreed by senates where he died,
And homage sworn by men who pierced his side,
Sworn with a curse still echoing to condemn
Those men, that slaughtered him who pardoned them.
And—'Jove!'—he cried, with face to heaven addressed,
And hand uplift—'Hear, Jove, and Gods attest!
'I too swore homage, and would shun the curse:
'But Rome defies it—oh may fate reverse!
'Who dares impugn the peace her senates nurse?
'War would from earth their every trace absterse,
'As dust winds dissipate or waves immerse.
'Let us our sorrows, as we can, coerce.
'For what remains except to gaze upon that hearse?
'Gaze, and forget what stains this sacred robe asperse,
'Whose daggers made its thirty rents, and whom they dared to pierce.'

A shout burst up, a scream of myriads seven;
It pealed from mount to sea, from earth to heaven:
Flames flew from Cæsar's pyre o'er throngs elate,
And showered revenge at each assassin's gate;
Whose very name proved fatal as their crime
To Helvius Cinna's head impaled sublime.
Oh! had that soldier eyes to scan himself,
And dared launch forth his spirit like his pelf,
Fire, as a banner scales a conquered tower,
Should wave where Tullius hides, ere evening lower,
And his like Cinna's limbs through streets be strown,
Torn joint from joint, and spurned from stone to stone."

"Yes, Fulvia, eloquence has tones and looks,
Rites, robes, and pageants, that move more than books.
But oh, what pomp is like the funeral suite?
What garb more awes us than the winding-sheet?
What look can touch, what gesture strike remorse,
Like the closed eye and pale unmoving corse?
What minstrel's lip like that of parted breath,
What temple like the tomb, what orator like death?
Theirs was that scene whose drama seemed divine,
And death's the eloquence you laud for mine.

Mute Cæsar's voice through every bosom rung,
And what inflamed their hearts inspired my tongue."

" Which now as worthy a cause and need employs.
Why fearest thou that sophist? still his noise!
Can nothing else arrest or change his note,
E'en break his neck, I prithee! gash his throat!
Or hurl him headlong o'er Tarpeia's rock,
Or down the groaning stair, for mobs to mock!
As erst he thrust his betters from the world,
Or late false Marius by thyself was hurled.
Where—oh could woman wield the axe and rods,
Tullius ere night should wallow, by the Gods!"

" What, ape his guilt! repeat the crime we blame!
Shrink from his feats, and emulate his shame!
No—'tis his worth I rival: I aspire to fame.
Upward! as earth exhales the morning dews,
To silver heaven and hang with golden hues:
As tall a cedar on the mountain towers
To blend its branches with celestial bowers;
As soars an eagle to the sun he eyes;
Or Rome's great altar incenses the skies.

No—though I pant to spurn his severed head,
As boys a football when the game is sped,
Rome must not cast his slaughter in our teeth,
Nor time inscribe—assassin—on my wreath,
Nor say—my dagger served where talent failed,
To quench a light the universe bewailed.
Nor were that wise, till senates learn affright,
Nor safe, where Brutus lies in wait, as night,
And walks by day, as pest, eluding sight,
And like a cloud o'erhangs to fulmine and to smite.

" Whate'er that shadow, give the winds its gloom!
Brutus has fled."

" Fled! Whither? When? With whom?"

" Hillward, with twenty horsemen, armed, this morn:
Nor unpursued. But spies were late to warn."

" Tullius, the Gods—I thank them—leave thee thus,
As forth some town in siege evoked by us.
Summon the senate! Sergius, speed amain!
Cite all, for noon, in Jove's the thunderer's fane!

Varius, warn Cicero—beware he fail,
Lest I send after him a storm to hale,
Send smiths and pioneers and batteries dread,
And shake his roof to ruin o'er his head.
Now speeds the chase: keen beagles scent the air;
The toils are pitched, the quarry quits his lair:
I wield a lance shall pin him to the sod;
Whence—who shall bring him rescue, man or God?
The hounds I cheer shall throttle him alone,
Or wolves he summons pick him to the bone."

" Yet more—his son in Brutus' flight has part;
With whom fled half his mind, and all his heart.
There's nothing of him left but words and tears:
Words so unnerved by grief, disease, and years,
As less dare brave thy reason tongued in wrath,
Than leaves the wind, when forests strew its path,
Than rushes stem the cataract in flood,
Or kine reply when lions howl for blood.
Go, then, wreak on him all thy vows prepare;
Seize as a felon, hale before thy chair,
Amid yon shrines of violated laws,
The Gods he mocks, the senate he o'erawes,

Read, with a people's cry, a battle's hue,
His catalogue of crimes, and wreak their due!
Yet, to bind fortune as by gage and pledge,
To fetter fate, let arms the temple hedge!
These, should despair his voice with pinion fledge,
Shall stun him with their din, or still him with their edge.
Or, should they falter, Rome has further powers:
He only bursts your toils to plunge in ours."

" So—Brutus arms. An adder cross his road!
And owls obscene its destiny forebode!
And tawny beaks, where crosses feed the crows,
On dusky wings hoot at him as he goes!
Though dark his refuge, and his flight be far,
Revenge has shafts like rays from Cæsar's star,
Which neither wings outstrip, nor walls repel,
Nor heights outreach, nor any depth but hell.
Tullius, we twain must meet, must reckon here.
A long account, and dark and dread arrear!
Deep usury swells, deep forfeits gage, the claim,
But thou shalt quit it, aye, in blood or shame.

" Fulvia, choice friends sup with us here to-night.
Ordain a feast, a revel rare and bright.

Bid every art that pleasure can enhance,
Bid mime and mummer, minstrelsy and dance.
Let cheer reflect the raptures of our soul,
As wine's red image fires the crystal bowl,
Sweet as revenge, and wild as power beyond control."

Thus these forecast the feast to victory owed;
While Sergius sped each summons on its road,
And Varius sought the gate of Cicero's abode.

SCENE THE FOURTH.

THE SLAVES.

Ὁ ἔρως ἐτίναξε τὰς φρένας,
Ὡς ἄνεμος κατ' ὄρος δρυσὶν ἐμπεσών.

In cloisters square, on turf as velvet shorn,
Midst tall arcades, whence Tullia's bier was borne,
Where a green ilex reared its bowery dome,
Whose murmuring top gave chaffinches a home,
Couched at the trunk, which woodbine wreaths enrolled,
A bondmaid bent, and broidered cloth of gold.
With delicate hand, and arm in motion graced,
Her needle blazoned flowers her pencil traced;
Pausing at times, oblivious of its art,
Till deep sighs freed the blood-encumbered heart.
Then heavenward turned her face. Of heaven it seems;
O'erspread with spirit, as with moonlight gleams

Pale flowers through shadows from the ilex thrown,
When sad its vesper-hymns to heaven intone.
With glistening dew her raven eyelids filled.
She rose. The court and cloisters round were stilled,
Save top leaves rustling to the zephyr's breath,
Stilled, as in chambers lately left by death.
Smooth from her brow dark tresses flowed behind;
Her brow, so sweetly grave, so sadly kind:
Her lips to peace and meekness seemed resigned;
Each look disclosed the heart, each feature dawned with mind.

Based on the sward stood Tullia's marble form,
Instinct with grace, with youth's affections warm.
Thither, half fond, half shuddering, stole the maid,
Cast o'er the statue's head her bright brocade,
Turned adverse, sought the tree's extremest shade,
Faced to the east, heaven's azure height surveyed,
And sunk upon her knees, and spread her hands, and prayed:
Silent, with sighs, as though her heart were sawn.
But, hark! did doors up yonder entry yawn?
Steps fall! Afoot she bounded, like a fawn,
Lodged in a thicket on the flowery lawn,
When boughs are stirred wherewith her lair is overdrawn,
Or echoes breathe of hunting horns from mountain tops at dawn.

Instant, like light pursuing shade, she flew,
The statue sought, the broidered robe withdrew,
And, gliding to the holm, bent o'er her task anew,
Ere pacing down the corridor dark Philo turned to view:
Her eyes with rheum, her neck with crimson flush,
As flowers bedewed, or vases seem to blush
With ruby wine infused, or bearing fruits that gush.

" Timna"—he cried, with voice that thrilled her ears,
Like funeral hymns, and aspect like the bier's—
" What thoughts contest thy solitude and soul ?
As noxious drugs embroil a milky bowl,
Or fountains shake with subterranean throes,
Or adverse winds divide untimely snows.
What wouldst thou mourn ? Our country and our God ?
Why shame ? At patience of a master's rod ?
I too could weep, the winter's cloud to tire,
And burn with blushes as the night with fire,
But flames within devour the tears that start,
And all my blood throbs curdling to the heart.
Come, while our lord his bath and breakfast claims,
'Tis ours to taste the freedom he but names;
And had'st thou sorrows tongue could ne'er repeat,
Or wrongs disowned by e'en the heart they eat,

There is can medicine all thy thoughts endure,
Caustic or balm, no matter, 'tis the cure."

" Are tears, dear Philo, like the passing rain,
Or morning's dew, of sources asked in vain?
Yon cloudless sun, these shades, the zephyr's breath,
Still halls, and chambers lately dark by death,
So teem with shapes, with echoes, of his task,
Is this the house where tears a reason ask?
Or, if with blushes mixed, canst thou admire,
What tears for any cause but heaven's require?
But what! my brother, is thy breast of bane?
Are thy heart's streams all bitter as the main?
Wilt always chew revenge, as kine their cud,
Or feed, as pelicans their young, with blood?
What! can thy anger rive our country's yoke?
Her love and law stand rooted as an oak,
But one whose foliage angry winds have shorn,
And vines its trunk with evergreens adorn.
That truth, so long by thy command suppress,
Our fate and faith lie buried in this breast,
As lies the sacred scroll—we only read—
Hid in their gifts who bought us and who feed:

A pearl unshelled, a lamp sepulchred deep,
Or star that beams from heaven while mortals sleep."

" Beware! for, Timna, stars the spoiler guide;
The lamp in sepulchres expires if spied;
Pearls melt—Why shame, shame flashes on thy cheek,
As fire on waves, like which thou tremblest. Speak!
Hast kept all secrets sacred as the scroll?
Ha! hast betrayed the jewel of thy soul?"

" Betrayed! what secret? What wouldst thou suspect!"

" Forsooth thy kin."—

" There's nought I recollect.
Ever that answer has the secret masked."

" Well—But thy faith?"

" No question ere was asked.
Yet why, once more, must mystery cloud my youth?
Why am I doomed to palter thus with truth?
Slaves bear no burthen sore as this thy yoke.
Why wear disguise when nothing needs a cloak?

Proclaim—whence burst the river of our birth,
Whose murmurs fill and fountains feed the earth:
Tell—where the cedar hills our childhood trod,
What law we hallow, and how hymn our God!"

"Aye, and be spurned, as Pompey spurned my sire,
Or on the gibbet, where he writhed, expire,
For that when bribes, and tears, and curses failed,
His dagger fenced the ark which Heaven had veiled.
Or, worse, be jeered by menials I contemn;
Hear all I reverence scorned and mocked by them;
Be haply forced to taste some monstrous rite,
Which humour now may shun, or silence slight;
Or brook the ridicule yon tyrant flings,
Whose sneer cuts deeper than a scorpion stings."

"Are those, dear brother, terms our lord deserves?
They wrong your duty, as they wring my nerves.
Think—what we owe that hand as nature's kind:
These bowers, these boughs, half image me his mind.
When, like this sultry morn, our temper strange
Has challenged storms to chasten it and change,
His words have fallen but as showers in May,
That bathe and brighten earth nor dim the day.

'Twas here, with funeral gown and ghastly look,
He stood, and o'er his daughter's coffin shook,
As nods a pine while axes ply its heart,
When dark her bier stood ready to depart.
Stooping he kissed the cold and yellowy cheek;
Then rose with lips that vainly strove to speak,
With eyes that glanced at heaven as deaf to prayer,
Then sunk to earth, and sobbed and gibbered there.
Yet not, when home the funeral pomp returned,
And void and silent bowers his bosom yearned,
Could sorrow sour or tears his temper rust,
Or but for moments bend his brow to dust:
But, like a cedar by the tempest bowed,
He struggled upward, and o'ertopped the cloud."

" But thou! thou fallest, to the wind as grass,
When pride proclaims—bow down that I may pass:
Oh strown, as pavement in the streets is spread,
And ground on commons, for each hoof to tread!"

" What say'st? Ah, bondman, chafe not with the cord,
As Tibur with its yoke, but know thy lord!
Hear him discourse, when winter trims its torch,
Or summer's twilight cools the western porch,

On themes of duty stern or friendship fond,
Kind nature's care, or death, and hopes beyond;
The strain seems hymned with more than mortal's tongue,
Or prophet's harp to Greek inventions strung;
Seems, as some follower's of the morning star,
Immured in flesh who beats against its bar,
With pinions fain to mount their native sphere,
And mix with scenes he half-developed here.
Oh! I could watch and listen till I swoon,
As Alba's lake looks upward to the moon,
When woods and waters breathe but love and light,
And rapt earth listens to the choirs of night.
Reft from our land, as lichen from the rock,
Ne'er to return, and bartered as a flock,
Redeemed from death, for servitude I live;
I owe the ransom, and am fain to give.
These hands, this heart, henceforward are my lord's;
Aye bound, as on the altar, bound with cords.
My hands his purchase holds in just control,
My heart his kindness, and his lore my soul.
I live to serve him, and would die to save.
Here let me toil, his drudge, and faithful slave,
To fold his garments, fan his feverish bed,
And bathe his feet, and worship where they tread."

SCENE THE FIFTH.

THE BROTHER AND SISTER.

Purpureus veluti quum flos, succisus aratro,
Languescit moriens; lassove papavera collo
Demisere caput, pluvia quum forte gravantur.

Philo heard this with forehead scowling dark;
Then, like an archer who selects his mark
And eyeing strains his arrow to the head,
He scanned her figure, fixed her gaze, and said.

" Born to disgrace thy father's land and blood,
Oh fallen, as rain descends to mix with mud!
What! like thy country, is thy God forsook?
Thy reason tainted, like thy heart and look?
To kiss the rod that humbles thee to earth;
To vaunt slave-services as deeds of worth;

Exult in bonds, as ornaments of pride,
And livery as the robe that decks a bride!
Art mad? But come—time presses—to my task!
For deem no glass more lucid than thy mask;
Nor hope that spider's web can give disguise,
And, for it snared thy soul, delude my eyes.
Forsooth, yon sophist, tottering to the tomb,
Charms thee to offer here thy prime and bloom;
To crave as grace each duty of disgust;
Devote to bonds, idolatrous of dust?
For him thy moonstruck dreams? As much, methinks,
The robe thou broiderest, and the tears it drinks.
Away! Oh Timna, hear! and Heaven, o'ersee!
Have I not hated all, to love but thee?
Hung round thee, as a blossom winds might shake;
Watched, as a bird its nestling from the snake;
And deemed thy smile the eyelids of the morn,
Thy voice the spring's when early buds are born?
And gazed at doors thy coming back to greet,
As the dog listening for its master's feet?
Thy heart must witness—happier far were mine
To lop this hand and fling it food for swine,
To seal these eyes forever from the sun,
These lips from breath, than do what must be done."

" Must, must be done! What means this menace? Speak!
Thou'rt mad. Avaunt! No nearer!—or I shriek.
Thou com'st to harm me, com'st perchance to slay;
Thine eyeballs glare so, like a beast of prey.
Thou hast a dagger underneath thy vest:
Ah! hast, I fear, a devil in thy breast.
Brother! Help, Heaven!—his visage turns to lead!
What ails thee? Why—what is it I have said?
What done, to offend thee? Dear! I love thee still.
Whom have I injured? Who can wish me ill?
Canst thou?—ah! wherefore should I shriek or shrink?
As waits a victim for the axe to sink,
Behold I stand with heavenward face—To work!
And say I did it, having stole thy dirk.
Nay, must I thither? Nearer still? Art mute?
That hand was Timna's! Will its touch pollute?
Thy kin's, or kind's! What, neither word nor look?
Dear brother, this is more than heart can brook.
Come, be thyself! be good! Let anger pass!
If I spoke folly, write it not not on brass.
Or treasure not the tablet in thy heart.
Oh! ever kind beyond a brother's part,
Thy boons successive as the year's have teemed,
And I ungrateful as a desert seemed.

Forgive! The way was wanting not the will.
Forgive! I always loved and love thee still."

" I would not, could not, kill thee. Cease the fear!
And cease those wheedling wiles, superfluous here.
Fawn on thy master, and those hands project,
Where lust would lip them though a plague had specked.
If hell pursue my heart, as death thy sin,
I wield no dagger for thy sex and kin.
Why, how looks veil thy conscience and its goads,
Like goodly fruit an inward worm corrodes!
Like one who borrows braids to trick her face,
Or wipes her lips and answers—where the trace?
What art thou not—a shell, whose pearl is reft?
A garland, worn to-day, and after weft?
A palm tree, for its fruit cut down to rot?
A toy, whose fondler spurns it?"

" I am not!"

" A dove, decoyed? A gage, foregone and won?
A robe, that flaunts and flickers in the sun,
Till the lord loathes it, and the slave receives,
And sells to mongers, who shall sell to thieves?"

" 'Tis false!"

" A fane, unholy hoofs have trod?"
A shrine, whose inward filth defiles its god?
A city, self-betrayed, to lick the dust,
Lest victors vend her to the sutler's lust?
A vine, whose tendrils creep from trunk to trunk?
A cup in idol worship poured and drunk?
A way-side meal—nay, fragments left behind,
Meat for a beggar or a beast to find?"

" Oh pity me!"

" Thou song, to please the streets!
A breeze that fills whatever sail it meets,
A glass to image aught that chance may give,
A brook, a bath—"

" Enough! I will not live."

" Oh! folly, hated by the fool it won;
By-word for shame; example shown to shun!
The crater's brink, the dragon's den, the shoal,
The meteor's fatuous fire, the opiate bowl,

The marsh whose mists the cheek of day begrime,
And darkness—cloak of lust and friend of crime!"

" Give me thy dagger!"

" Thou, who wast the light;
The spotless space in heaven's o'erarching height;
Lovelier than rays that evening's robe adorn,
Or star that brightens from the brows of morn:
Whose beauty's image eyes like mine could trace
In all by nature formed to charm or grace;
The lonely isle, the lake, the garden's bower,
The cloud, breeze, bird, each rosy fruit and flower,
Whate'er intones, whate'er exhales, to please,
Thee I admired, and God adored, in these."

" Oh brother!"

" Now—go, scan that scroll divine!
Its foulest signs for shame but figure thine.
Read—for what sin our father's blood was spilt,
And own thou blendest both the type and guilt!
My hand upraised attests against them twain—
Where, where is Heaven's?"

" Aye, where? My brain! my brain!"

"Where, earth, thy rocks to sepulchre her bones?
Words are mine only, them I hail as stones."

"Peace! peace! The zenith's voice! An arm! An eye!
An arrow! Peace! till yonder shape pass by."

"Woe to the tower whose gate beleaguers win,
Or fire that should obey controls within!
There beasts shall wallow, there the ivy shoot,
The Satyr dance there, and the owlet hoot.
Woe to the golden corn field trod by swine!
And woe when goats have gnawn the bloomy vine!
But where can hide the forehead stung with scorn,
When time unveils night's nakedness to morn?
When buds, in blight ere blown, the scent revolt;
And wagging heads shall hiss—Precocious colt!
Faugh! for the sniffing snout, and eyes askaunt,
The prurient prance, and whinnying ramp! Avaunt!
Whom shame, that swells like rottenness, shall fill,
Bloat as a serpent gorged and greedy still."

"Thy dag—thy dagger!"

"Take it! I retire.
Thy crimes will teach its use and my desire."

"Stay!—though thy counsel seem a tiger's yell,
Thy mouth the quiver's, and its shafts of hell.
Are thine ears iron? Is thy heart the rock's?
Or thy shape borrowed by some fiend, that mocks
And smites my soul, as corn beneath the flail,
And whelms with heavier stones than stoners hail?
Take back the cruel gift thy hands have given!
My heart requires no dagger to be riven:
Or if thy venom's tongue seem slowly to have thriven,
The tardy task thy hands must help, for mine have vainly striven.
I dare not fling at Heaven the life it lends,
And challenge doom ere summoned for amends.
Nor should a brother claim my compt to sum,
Nor thrust me thither, ere mine hour be come,
Nor doom me here unheard, nor death prepare
Till both have space for penitence or prayer."

"Poor Timna! Steel might soften at thy sighs,
Stones weep, but pity is forbid these eyes:
It's kin, contempt, is all I have to give.
Is shame religion? Is it Rome's? But live!
I guard this dagger for a worthier breast:
For thine—still something waits beneath my vest;

Something to make thee envy dust inurned,
And mourn too late my dagger was returned.
What! Thou would'st plead? thine innocence forsooth?
'Tis spleen suspects and slander wrongs thy youth?
Would'st front accusers? aye, would'st haply swear
Thy faith and fame untainted?—Out! Beware!
Know'st thou these letters? Lo!—a scroll I snatched
From hands its writer had to thee dispatched!
Read!—but first hear—and Heaven attest my voice!
My feet had followed thine, were death their choice;
But since 'tis shame, revenge in me survives;
And here divides the pathway of our lives.
Marcus has fled. Be fleet as sin his horse,
Yet know—as never sin outrode remorse,
Shall arrows I have shot ere evening drain his corse.
Behold! my garment's verge is stained with mud,
From streets I sped his followers through for blood;
And, as I rend this border specked with spilth,
And hurl that portion thither, filth to filth,
So I renounce thee, disavow, discard;
Abjure thy kin, acquaintance, speech, regard;
From my heart's thought I raze, I banish thee;
Or may our fathers' God do more to me!

Thy name shall perish, thy remembrance fade,
As tides efface the footsteps childhood made,
Nor word nor look of thine hereafter be repaid:
Nor will I heed thy grave nor ask the spot;
But thou henceforth shalt be a blank, a blot,
Darkness, and void, as earth's primæval lot;
And as earth's evermore shall seem to me, I wot!
Till I therefrom have hunted whom I haunt—
As herds are followed by the wolf they daunt,
Who waits till any fall, for famine makes him gaunt.
Out of my path—my sight! Begone! I know thee not—Avaunt!"

But, sobbing, trembling, maddening in dispair,
With heavenward gaze, hands wrung, dishevelled hair,
Eyes pouring fountains, face to purple flushed,
Lips drawn, pent breath, and bursting heart, she rushed;
Clung to his arm, and kissed his hand, and kneeled;
Speechless, till shrieks in broken utterance pealed—
"Stay! Hear! One moment—God forbid—forgive!
One word—one look—I can not speak, nor live.
My guilt—'tis less—Unfair! unfeeling! Stay!
Hear, brother, pity—see me—save me—slay!"
He shook her off as dust, and burst as fire away.

With eyelids locked, and ears that seemed as fast;
Yet caught these accents more, as forth he past,
Which never silence stilled nor sound outcast,
"Ah! brother, God forgive—God love thee—to the last."

The galleries echoed to the bounding door.
Awhile she lay, half swooning, on the floor.
Till, seen the scroll his hands departing hurled,
She rose, moved thither, grasped it and unfurled.
The seal was severed. "'Tis from him"—she said.
And faltering back to shades the ilex spread,
She sunk, with swimming eyes and dizzy brain, and read.

"Marcus to Timna, greeting, and farewell.
I write, for oh! my tongue could never tell,
Nor eyes endure, what written wrings my core,
That we must separate, and must meet no more.
A summons peals, for service none forbears:
'Tis Rome's, 'tis freedom's: I am armed, am theirs.
Am roused from pleasure's spell, pursued too far,
And amorous dreams by rapture's stealthy star—
Oh follies sweet! oh thus could wisdom please!
But judge me—was I born for only these?

Judge—could I doubt at honour's call to rouse,
Ere fetters bind my feet, or shame my brows?
Nor therefore say my plighted oaths were vain,
As vapour winds dispelled from Venus' fane,
When mingling incense at her shrine we vowed—
Our loves and lives should mingle like the cloud.
Love still is thine, while sense and memory live:
But can I render more than mine to give?
My life is Rome's; she cancels half my oath:
Which kept would outrage ties of holier troth.
Her patriots arm; I seek the camp with them:
Judge me, and—ah! I merit it—condemn!
Yes, thrust me from a heart too good for mine.
Forget the past. Let night its secret shrine.
Devote me hence to vengeance foes shall wreak,
And nought can solace, but the death I seek.
Farewell! Thee Venus as her own infold,
Thee bless with beauty, pleasure, health, and gold;
Thee every God protect—and I no more behold."

As Timna read, her nerves resumed their tone,
Her tears dried up, her visage turned to stone.
Again she read it, studying as she read:
Then sat, with eyelids close, and pressed her head.

She read it thrice: then viewed with vacant gaze;
Then gave it plaits a thousand different ways;
Then eyed the sailing clouds, the rustling shades,
Flowers on the grass, and counting culled the blades.
At last, with efforts, roused to self control,
She rose; within her girdle thrust the scroll;
Tossed from her cheeks and knotted back her hair;
Snatched the brocade, and folding it with care—
As if her toils were here forever past—
Smoothed o'er her arm. With vision downward cast,
With sullen steps, scarce conscious where they wound,
She traced the pillared cloister round and round;
Stopped, where an entry reared its broad arcade;
Then shuddering stared, as by a dream betrayed,
And darted up the arch, and vanished like a shade.

SCENE THE SIXTH.

THE SALUTATION.

Οἱ δ' ἄλλοι εἵξαντες ὑπέτρεσαν, ἠΰτε κίρκους
Ὠκυπέτας ἀγεληδὸν ὑποτρέσσωσι πέλειαι.
Ἐς δὲ πύλας ὁμάδῳ πέσον ἀθρόοι· αἶψα δ' ἀϋτῆς
Πλῆτο πόλις, στονόεντος ὑποτροπίῃ πολέμοιο.

But Philo joined the train his master led,
Through aisles with vaulty arabesques o'erspread.
And bright the sage, as early autumn, went,
Blythe as the breeze when sails are homeward bent,
Serene as health, and confident as truth:
Bread and the bath had half restored his youth.
In senatorian robes, with golden fringe,
Like clouds whose edge the beams of morning tinge,
He sought the hall, where Dorian columns frowned;
Where chequered marbles sternly palled the ground;

Where friends and followers waiting him conversed,
And Rome convened her worthiest and her worst.
In snowy gowns, some bordered red, they pace;
Various in age and manners, voice and face.
He enters, hailed, as light on shadows flung:
Salutes and welcome burst from every tongue.
Groups blend in one, where all wide circling burn
To grasp his hand, and greet him, each in turn.

" O friends, O citizens!"—outbroke his cries,
As Triton's summons when the seas arise,
Or forests on the mount when menaced from the skies—
" What din of barbarous force confounds our ear?
O'er Rome's high wall holds Hannibal the spear?
That thus her noblest gather in my gate,
To watch with me a moment big with fate,
To raise or bow for ever hence the neck,
And rescue Rome, or perish in her wreck.

" Plotius, and Pollio, both most welcome here,
Nor Quintius less, oh names to freedom dear!
Balbus, thou sword to guard thy country's side,
Gellius, her lamp, and Catulus, her pride,

Have we not bowed, as beams o'erburthened, down,
Long for Rome's welfare, long for our renown?
Still, 'twas a hero, 'twas a genius swayed;
Rome chose him, Heaven upheld, and earth obeyed:
But were his chains, so light and brilliant, riven
To bring our necks the leaden yoke now given?
To pave a path where folly mounts with vice,
And serve the slaves of lewdness, drink, and dice?

"Thou, whose example and whose lore combined
Have earned Rome's thanks for half Octavian's mind,
Which, like the nascent moon, reflects on night,
An orb's full outline filling fast with light,
How speeds thy pupil? whither point his spears?
Whence come his letters? what has reached thine ears?"

A grey haired chief, full featured, brightly eyed,
With soldier's front, and courtier's voice, replied.
"Tullius, with thine earth's destiny is swayed.
If wisdom, worth, and eloquence can aid,
Be thine heard now, or ever hence be mute!
Thus Cæsar's letters thee as sire salute:
Cheer thee, to brave Mark Anthony's behest,
And pour thy spirit through the senate's breast:

For steel and storm have sown Campania's farms,
Whose crop shall burst Brundusium's gate with arms."

" Toranius, well! But, ah"—the sage replied,
In tones whose purport reached no ear beside—
" Campania's fields are distant; crops may fail:
And, lo! the consul's bound beneath his flail.
Whose shield shall screen my bosom from his swords?
Or what is worth's, or wisdom's power, but words?
Friends fly; Rome quails; Octavian arms too late.
Ourselves must baffle, or succumb to, fate.

" Now—by the Gods—methinks that labour light,
And suffering sweet, achieved in Geta's sight;
Or should thine laud, or thine inspire the plan,
Hereditary friends of Rome and man,
Appius, and Antius; or should Varro's pen
Record the tale to charm all future men.
What is't we fear? Yon legionary knives?
What can they rifle, or we lose, but lives?
Which who would cherish, who not spurn as chains,
But for the hope of riving his who reigns?
In whom no shame, no decency is shrined,
No honour; nothing temperate, nothing kind;

Of conscience nought; of truth, of feeling, none:
Nor need I warn you—sleep till day be done,
And wake to-morrow, slaves for ever bowed
To power, not merely pitiless and proud,
But base and brutish, and, oh! more abhorred,
Power, that shall make its subjects like their lord."

Cheers burst from every heart, in vain subdued:
He paused for silence, and as storm pursued.
" Ye know his insolence, ye know its ends,
Ye know his heart, his household, and his friends.
Debauched, debased, wroth, reckless, ruthless things,
Knaves, gamblers, drunkards: these must be your kings!
To serve whom—woe my country! woe my race!
'Twere the last misery, 'twere the last disgrace.
Then since both fame and freedom stand at stake,
Rouse, by the Gods, ho! citizens, awake!
Resume your fathers' fortitude and worth;
Restore to man the rights of Roman birth;
Or claim a Roman's death, and freemen bite the earth.
If now the Commonwealth's last moments wear—
An omen Heaven forbid! let all prepare,
And as gladiators bold succumb with grace,
Let us, earth's princes, patterns of our race,

Prove we contemn existence reft of fame,
And sink with honour, ere we serve with shame.
Much have we witnessed, more than freedom sees,
Some hoping change, some loving life and ease;
But force imposed, and fate decreed, the yoke,
Aye fate! and yet we bore it not, but broke:
Shall we now suffer bonds a brute would bind,
A monster's reign in morals and in mind?"

"Never! No! Never!"—cried the circling crowd,
In fierce response; from none as Lænas loud.
Popilius Lænas: time adorned his race,
Strength filled his limbs, and comeliness his face;
His smile, a flower whose petals feed the bee;
His voice, more flattering than a summer's sea,
Deep in whose caves the tusky waltron swims,
Or shark yawns over for a bather's limbs.
By women praised for merits men denied,
Skilled in intrigue, forechoosing fortune's side,
Prepared with words, less present with his wit,
Prompt with his weapon, reckless whom to hit,
Gay, selfish, vain, he led a legion's arms,
Of Cæsar bargained for a sister's charms;

And next aspired to grasp the prætor's rods,
Through Mars and Mercury, his guardian gods.

'Twas famed—his sire's last agonies deplored
A son's impatience for the father's hoard;
Whose will was known too partial for his child,
And whose last food was cake the heir compiled.
A crime his stepdame bade the laws compense,
But laws absolved, for Tullius made defence.
Again accused, of public gold purloined,
In missions far, which bluff Herennius joined,
Both heads still stood endangered of the laws,
Yet safe, for Tullius still espoused the cause.

Elate, with glossy hair, and broidered vest,
Forward, through worthier ranks, Popilius prest;
As sleek a serpent rolls, whose slough is cast,
And venom hoarded till his prey be fast;
Rolls through the wavy corn, its stalks displaced,
To taste the stream, or throttle such as taste.
" Father of Rome, her fates are well forescanned"—
He loud commenced, and seized the sage's hand—
" But thou shalt triumph o'er the fate she fears,
If fortitude have hands, or reason ears.

Lend thine a moment"—Leading him aside
To shades a column more remote supplied—
" These cares engross thee. Ere the moon be brim,
Herennius must be judged, and I with him.
Life is his stake: which I might well decline,
Yet shield, as when with thee I shielded mine.
He claims my faith, my care, my eloquence:
And I have pledged them all for his defence.
Cast thou the burthen of this cause on me.
I crave the labour—but shall send the fee."

As glows an anchor in the forge's blast,
As sparks flash off to hammers sounding fast,
Contempt before this outrage warmed to ire,
Till indignation kindled forth as fire:
Whose light with mockery radiated his mien.
Forgetful of the hour, the need, the scene,
His client's claims, his hospitable roof,
He spoke, and tones gave venom to reproof.

" A liberal pledge, and conscionable prayer!
Much of those gages three is thine to spare.
Though luck, without them, may redeem thy vow:
What saved thee erst has puzzled me till now;

Methought mine own poor sophistry so thin,
The blindest judge might scan the truth within.
Go, and as sage a bench decide this stake.
For fee, send what thou wilt, except a cake."

He turned, nor could foresee, nor deigned to reck,
The sword he uttered should divide his neck.
Pale Lænas grasped the hilt, and sheathed the blade,
And coffered by his heart, till time displayed.

But who is he retires, where Tullius turns?
That tall, swart youth, whose cheek a hectic burns,
Of rustic mien, but features none could hate,
Dark, downward eye, with pupils wide dilate,
Broad brow, whose locks untimely frost invades,
And hollow breast, but conscious as a maid's?

" Thy presence honours and adorns my home,
Virgilius Maro, hail, thou hope of Rome!
For such I claimed thy planetary rays,
When first to Rome Lycoris sang those lays,
Which while the theatre rose up and hailed,
Methought the choirs of Greece their radiance paled,

Far Rhodope forgot the Orphean strain,
And proud Parnassus stooped to Mantua's plain.

" The God who dictates shall reward thy cares,
Nor doubt thy song shall echo as the air's:
While rivers roll, while woods their foliage rear,
And morn and eve keep measure to the sphere;
Echo through hearts of every age and clime,
To kindle fancies more than heaven sublime,
To image visions lovelier than the sight's,
Robe truth with grace, and, wielding Nature's rights,
Give all, that sense perceives or fancy plans,
Form, feeling, voice, and intellect, like man's.

" What, though a listless world neglect thy lays,
As those larks carol to the herds that graze;
Though false desert shall daily pass thee by,
And rank survey with scarcely conscious eye,
And envy league with ignorance and pelf
To slight thy merit, never doubt thyself!
The worth Rome scorns, her children shall requite:
This age may wrong thee, all beside shall right.
Then keep thy heart aloof, and hope elate:
Fulfil the Poet's task, respect his state:

Nor sell thy soul to spleen or ridicule,
Two thriftless slaves that ruin whom they rule:
Nor make thy diffidence a mask for pride,
Nor seek retirement self-esteem to hide:
Nor let detraction, like a bat by night,
Exhaust thy veins, nor flattery's drug excite:
But ply thy task, with forehead meek and calm,
As some lone lake, with spirit, as a palm,
That o'er the waters heavenward bears its wreath
Of boughs, dim imaged in the depths beneath."

But lo! who enters, with a mourner's suite,
Towards whom all turn, and startle as they greet?
What! Lucius Cæsar? Aye, when floods invade,
The wild wolf hies to humankind for aid.
When Nature's wars begin, her children's cease:
Wolf, sheep, and shepherd hold the hill in peace.
So gaunt with years, and worn with sorrow's load,
The Consul's uncle seeks his foe's abode.
Whose courteous palm scarce reached that ancient man,
When thus, with sighs, his solemn speech began.

"Tullius, I come, with neither love's pretence,
Nor hatred's cause, to bring or bar me hence:

For we have walked as creatures kind divides;
And meet, as streams long severed mix their tides,
Where earth's and all its people's wants require,
And where Rome's sons should rally round her sire.
Julius is gone; by right or wrong opprest,
How loved of me, these weeds, these tears attest:
By those he prized how treated for his trust,
By those he pardoned how reviled in dust,
Let thy decree, oblivion, sweep from thought,
As winds dispersed the smoke his funeral wrought;
And bring, as vernal breezes, peace to earth,
And spare what little rests of Roman worth.
For this henceforward all the good should band,
For this I sought thy hall, and seize thy hand.

" But whom one hope inspires, one fear alarms:
What, what intends my sister's son in arms?
That threat, now Cæsar's quellers, now his heir;
Now Rome, with chains no servitude can bear.
Each fane, each forum fills with barbarous hordes;
Again he cites the senate girt with swords.
E'en now his lictors called me—what to vote,
How speak, alas! his dagger at my throat?

Expect thy summons, and forecast thy course!
To brave or bear, to fly or flatter force.
Which comes with studied phrase to outrage thee,
And haply mark for bloodshed few shall flee.
Shall we midst soldiers hear their leader talk,
As fowl that cower beneath the hovering hawk?
Or leave the senatehouse for dupes to fill,
Who vote his dictate for their order's will?
Thus Rome were lost—and whither shall we fly?
Ah! when fate summons what can man but die?
Consult! Henceforth thy counsels shall be mine.
Rome waits the radiance of thy worth to shine,
As blazing beacons cite the brave from far,
Or ships dark heaving hail their polar star.
For Rome, for earth, take counsel, ere too late—
For hark! the lictor thunders at thy gate."

SCENE THE SEVENTH.

THE SUMMONS.

Ἆ δειλοὶ, τί κακὸν τόδε πάσχετε; νυκτὶ μὲν ὑμέων
Εἰλύαται κεφαλαί τε, πρόσωπά τε, νέρθε τε γοῦνα·
Οἰμωγὴ δὲ δέδῃε, δεδάκρυνται δὲ παρειαί·
Αἵματι δ' ἐρράδαται τοῖχοι καλαί τε μεσόδμαι·
Εἰδώλων δὲ πλέον πρόθυρον, πλείη δὲ καὶ ἀυλὴ,
Ἰεμένων Ἔρεβόσδε ὑπὸ ζόφον· ἠέλιος δὲ
Οὐρανοῦ ἐξαπόλωλε, κακὴ δ' ἐπιδέδρομεν ἀχλύς.

Peals the broad door; vaults vibrate; roofs rebound.
" Ho, House! The fasces!"—porch and peristyle resound.
Through court and corridor, from gate to hall,
Through menial throngs, all yielding, kneeling all,
The lictors come, with menace in their march.
With rods elate they halt beneath the arch,
Divide, and Varius from the rear precedes;
Thee, Tullius, cites; the formal summons reads;

And adds the threat—" Lest ruin speed forthwith,
To smite these walls by pioneer and smith,
And leave thy dwellingplace the owl's abode,
To warn Rome's children by their father's mode."
Grief stung each bosom, indignation fired,
But reverence hushed, till office had retired.
When Atticus, preventing all, took stand
Before the entry's arch, and waved his hand.

" Forbear! by reason's right, by friendship's debt,
By every God, whose statues here are met,
Deny the summons, and disdain the threat.
Madness! to seek a senate arms beset,
As sheep the shambles find, or fish the net:
Alas, the blood those savage soldiers let,
Shall stream through Rome, till every hearth be wet,
A flood no liberty can stay, no tyranny forget!
Why, if Antonius thought the world his right,
Were this the challenge, and to-day the fight,
Are words the instruments, or fanes the place,
Or yours the arts, to arbitrate the case?
No! Earth shall hear it, pole to pole repay;
All nations pledge it; all become its prey:

Camps, armies, fleets, and fire with flag unfurled,
And pest shall plead it, through a wasted world.
Why tempt a gulph you cannot close with life,
To swell the slaughter nor arrest the strife?
Victims! whom no religion deems it due,
No God accepts, no votary shall pursue."

He ceased, for Tullius raised his brow that bowed,
Long dark as night, now flashing as a cloud:
And, like its echoes, as his words gan roll,
His lancing eyes, and coruscating soul,
Thrilled every hearer's heart, and thralled to his control.

" In Daunia's wood the wise may doubt their path,
May doubt on ocean when it foams in wrath,
Doubt, where dun Egypt's catacombs are crost,
Or labyrinths in Crete, if clues be lost;
Doubt more, if fain forthcoming fate to scan,
Or spell the future from the past of man:
But duty needs no guide, and owns no doubt,
Though omen, pharos, path, and pole be out;
Or could I deviate, and all these recede,
Hail! Lucius Cæsar, who had'st come to lead.

But honour's road is broad and brilliant still,
To all whose souls distinguish good from ill:
Things, neither fate can change, nor fortune share.
What I may suffer, or Antonius dare,
Let Heaven provide: this only I foresee—
My life imports far less to Rome and me,
Than his defeat to-day in senate sped;
'Tis this I must achieve, alive or dead.
No edict there shall gild his crimes to day,
Nor treason dress itself in law's array,
If I can aught by either vote avail,
Or voice, which needed ne'er was known to fail.

" How long for me his venom has been churned,
Its means, and menace—all is known and spurned.
Which let him dare when I in senate sit,
And learn his courage may outstrip his wit:
Aye, learn 'twere better beard a lion's sleep,
Or ford the shifting sand which torrents sweep,
Tempt Ætna's crater when its fires are brim,
Plunge in the Nile where riverhorses swim,
Or tread a Lybian asp with naked feet,
Than outrage me again where senates meet.

" If more he dare—Fate presses ; noon is sheen ;
'Tis time—And, thou ! whose temple is the scene,
With whom Rome shares the care of humankind,
Jove, with thy courage nerve the senate's mind :
Descend in spirit where thy form is throned,
And judge a cause by nothing good disowned !
Ho ! every citizen, who would be free,
All, who would save their country, forth ! with me !"

Such was the call Rome's Consul used of old,
To marshal arms no sanction else enrolled ;
When Volscians capped the hills, like misty morn,
Or loud as ocean's rang Etruria's horn ;
Or Gaul o'er Tiber glared with torch and sword ;
Or reined and reinless horse Numidia poured,
While towery elephants o'erlooked the gate :
'Twas thus the Consul braved and baffled fate ;
Marching from senate, in his sanguine pall,
Through the thronged Capitol, to arm the wall.
And as the bold then followed forth to fame,
Serrying their ranks, and proffering each his name,
So here Rome's senators pursued her sire,
With cheers, with lifted hands, with brows of fire,

With shouts of names, of names through earth renowned;
Answering, as sound to blows, as echo sound:
As chords when some enthusiast sweeps the scale,
Prelude to love's or death's funereal wail.
And deep and wild as dirges swell the wind,
So tolled from piers, where Atticus reclined,
With tears, with face aghast, with hands up-wrung,
Unseen, as though those pillars found a tongue,
Accents unearthly tolled, from hall to gate,
And thrilled each bosom hurrying thence to fate.

"Madmen, forbear! Night thickens where ye tread,
Involves your knees, envelopes every head:
The death-cry kindles; tears the visage flood;
The walls, the comely columns stream with blood;
Grim shadows throng the portal, throng the hall,
In hellward course, where evening spreads her pall:
The zenith peals; the sun from heaven is hurled;
And smoke ascends of ruin to the world."

The voice, as fate's, through every bosom thrilled.
Each step was stayed, each pulse a moment stilled.
But summons, strong as fate, within them spoke,
Rome's and her sire's: a moment more they woke;

And outward swept, nor heeded more the warning,
Than dreamy phantoms that depart with morning.
Through streets with porphyry paved, with trees o'crarched,
By porches, fanes, and palaces, they marched;
In snowy robes, that flowed with many a fold,
With purple edged, in sandals clasped with gold,
Striding in grace. Pride glistened in their frown,
And high resolve their foreheads seemed to crown.
Before went awe and wonder, heralds twain;
Patriots pursued, patricians swelled the train:
Crowds opened; soldiers, hurtling by, were awed;
Marts hushed; and Rome admired, nor dared applaud.

As ships, with stately prow, and canvass wide,
And streaming pennons, stem a river's tide;
When zephyrs, waited long, invite the sail,
And waves dance blithely to the sounding gale:
Bark after bark puts forth from bank and bay,
To vie in speed, and seize the foamy way;
Bound for the mart, and conscious of their homes,
Where some vast city spreads her towers and domes,
O'er either bank with marble arches yoked:
Whence merchants hail the convoy long invoked,

Compute the venture, and distrust its gain;
While friends long parted gaze, they fear in vain,
And foes in secret curse the mercies of the main.

Ἐρχόμενον δ' ἀνὰ ἄστυ, θεὸν ὡς, εἰσορόωσιν.

ACT III.

SCENE THE FIRST.

THE SACRIFICE.

Estne Dei sedes, nisi terra, et pontus, et aër,
Et cœlum, et virtus ?

Meanwhile, afar, where Rome's great altar stood,
On granite steps, high graven, heaped with wood,
Viewed by each fane that crowned the mountains seven,
Viewed by each God for whom it blazed to heaven;
Where streets converging left an area round,
With trees and trophies graced, with columns bound,
And balusters to guard the tesselated ground;
There Anthony the Consul stood, with followers armed and gowned.
For thither priests, with pomp of robe and rite,
With choirs of youths and maidens stoled in white,
With chalice, wand, and banner borne in air,
Have hymned and censed a victim vast and fair,

A bull, of mane with golden threads inwove,
And brow with flowers, a sacrifice to Jove.
" Ho!"—cries the herald—" Who are gathering nigh?"
" Many and good!"—the quiring throngs reply.
" Good be your words!"—rejoins the ritual chaunt:
And rings the chorus—" Hence, profane, avaunt!"

White as a cloud, and crested as the moon,
The proud beast waits, a voluntary boon;
Midst augurs bright with silvery crook and pall,
And ranks of flamens crowned with mitres tall.
The pæan soars: the pontiff bathes his hands:
With radiant train, beneath the base, he stands;
Ascends the altar; hoods him; prostrate bows;
And lifts his arms with offertory vows.
Now kneels, with solemn gesture, fronting east;
Now turns, his palms outstretching o'er the beast:
Then kneads from golden patins flour and salt;
Then sprinkles o'er the offering pure of fault:
The censer swings; the chalice tastes, outpours;
Remounts the altar, and his God adores.
All silent add their prayers: the Consul these.
" Sire, whom this host is sacrificed to please,

So let my foemen give their blood to gush,
So fall my vengeance, as yon axe, to crush!"
A broad white cloud that instant veiled the sun;
Heaven's azure else of mist or spot had none;
Sublime this glistened as the godhead's robe,
And seemed his presence shadowing o'er the globe.
The pontiff wheels: each breath is awed, each eye:
He waves his arm—dread signal! Heaved on high
The glittering axe has crushed the victim's skull;
Down, prone, on knees knocked outward, drops the bull.
The knife has gashed his throat; and through the chasm
His heart's blood pours: with agonizing spasm,
Rolled on his side the host surrenders life;
And now lies spread supine beneath the knife,
That deftly down the thorax strips the skin,
And opes the fabric, how divine! within.
Radiant, through rows of mitre, pall, and crook,
With train of priests and flamens, sped to look,
The pontiff moves to lead the Consul nigh:
He foremost strides, with haughty step and eye,
Scarce deigns a glance, to scan the omens shown,
Where perfect works forbode perfection for his own.
He reads the auspices: a priest proclaims.
The sacrifice is dressed; the altar flames:

The epode swells. A vapory pillar towers,
From fiery base, till lost in heavenly bowers.
Sweet odours breathe from incense, myrrh, and wine :
Each sense is charmed ; each impulse seems divine :
Each token augurs Heaven's acceptance won.
The last chaunt falls—" 'Tis lawful to be gone !"—
The communing of Gods and men is done.

SCENE THE SECOND.

THE CAPITOL.

Regia solis erat sublimibus alta columnis,
Clara micante auro, flammasque imitante pyropo;
Cujus ebur nitidum fastigia summa tenebat;
Argenti bifores radiabant lumine valvæ.
Materiam superabat opus.

The word was given: arms sounded, trumpets pealed;
Twelve fasces rose, plumes flickered, squadrons wheeled;
The Consul's train moved on. In midst, elate,
Girt, as with clouds, he sunlike strode in state;
Followed by throngs in pride of office stoled,
And senatorial gowns with purple edged and gold.
Steel flashed, and chargers neighed, in van and rear:
Crowds lined the path, some murmuring, some to cheer:
While clarions pealed from choirs in broidered vest,
Whose measures throbbed as hope through every breast.
With youth and loveliness each casement thrilled;
All balcons bowed; all battlements were filled:

And guards turned out from portico and arch,
With arms and drums, to hail the Consul's march.
Through piles, that walled the broad triumphal road,
On, towards the steep Capitoline, they flowed,
Wound up its height, the marble steps to climb,
Where Jove's the thunderer's temple towered sublime.

Sublime it towered, with columns high in air,
Ranked as a grove, three hundred, bright and fair,
That reared their brows in elegance and pride,
Of mode Corinthian, flanking every side.
Northward, and west, with jutty cliffs amassed,
Substructions rose precipitous and vast;
On which, o'erlooking Rome a terrace smiled,
To welcome steps in seven gradations piled,
Spotless and broad: with which the base was zoned,
Whereon the cell and porches stood as throned:
With fluted shafts, and leafy crowns aloof,
And bossy frieze, and corners massy proof.
Fair, as in fields a high imbowering holm;
Fair, as an isle o'erruling ocean's foam;
Fair, as at twilight burns the evening star;
Or dawn up sprung on mountain tops afar;

So shone the fane: so beautiful, so bright,
So pure, it seemed to radiate grace and light;
Nor planned, nor framed, by aught of mortal birth,
But more let down from heaven than piled on earth.
For men to worship, and be rapt on high,
And Gods themselves inhabit from the sky.
Fabric, like his, who gave the hills their form,
Who built in clouds the palace for the storm,
Made streams their crystal course, the seas their home,
Arched over earth the star-illumined dome;
Each mode, each tenement of life designed,
And last, composed the frame of human kind,
And, noblest work of all, the temple of man's mind.

Yes, God transpires in all creation plans;
How great in nature's works! and great in man's!
Come, while the pomp of empire climbs the height,
Pause on the terrace, and lift up thy sight,
From groups of monuments that clothe the hill,
And lift thy soul, for loveliness to fill.
Lo! sheen with shadows from the cornice thrown,
Fair figures throng the frieze, and breathe in stone,
Girding the broad entablature on high,
Bright as the starry zodiac girds the sky.

With chariots, horse, and foot, and captives bound,
And choirs, and masks grotesque, and maidens crowned,
By victims led, a triumph sweeps the fane around.
There cymbals sound; there shell and clarion breathe;
There bullocks bend their neck, and chaplets wreathe:
Tall youths, and virgin groups, of shapely limb,
And graceful gesture, swell the conqueror's hymn:
And visors mock, fawns gambol, satyrs dance,
Grim veterans cheer, and neighing chargers prance.
And there Bithynia's daughter bows the head,
There Pontus pales, there Asia weeps her dead;
And Asia's kings, with arms in iron crost,
Bear up to death the diadem they lost.
While plumed and belted, like the morning star,
The conqueror silent towers upon his car.
Legions march after, whom the east had crowned;
And songs and shouts triumphal peal around.

Pause yet, and higher lift thy vision still,
And lift thy soul, for grander thoughts to thrill!
Each pediment has scenes of heaven displayed,
The Gods, here exiled, there victorious made.
In rear, from mountains piled on mountains high,
Titans, a host colossal, storm the sky;

With brows to brave the lightning, voice to drown,
And giant limbs to drag the thunderer down;
Who, while the Gods forsake him, stands in ire,
With arms high heaved, and launches bolts of fire.
In front, the tympan glows with victory's hour;
The Gods returning throng their father's bower;
Whose brows, with radiance circled, cease to lour;
In midst supreme o'er earth and heaven they tower;
An eagle at his footstool seems to cower;
And muses hymn him on the throne exulting in his power.
Above the roof, a golden Victory frowned,
On wings, alighting, and with laurel bound;
And vases twain of gold the acroteria crowned.

But all with wealth and beauty beamed elate:
Yet simple, solemn—all was chaste and great.
The charms, which sculpture on the fane bestowed,
Seemed less than sculpture to the fabric owed,
Seemed more; as lovers doubt if nobler grace
Illume the dance from woman's form or face.
For all was one, magnificent, and whole:
It awed and charmed, enlarged and filled, the soul:
As grace embodied, art incarnate shown,
Truth fixed in form, or music shaped in stone.

Of things etern, yet fresh as morning's hill;
And still the same, yet new and varying still,
With lights and shadows. As the perfect moon,
Through forest tops, or clouds in dim festoon,
Emerging pure, when vapours melt as curled
Behind the orbit whence her shafts are hurled;
Or when she towers on isles or mountains pearled,
And radiates more than light, with lap unfurled;
Or rends the pall of night in breezy fragments whirled,
And beams the image of a God, to charm and bless the world.

SCENE THE THIRD.

THE SENATE.

Ἀμφὶ δὲ λαῶν
Πληθὺς ἐπερχομένων ἄμυδις θέεν· οἱ δὲ, φαεινοὶ
Ἀστέρες ὥς νεφεέσσι, μετέπρεπον.

But ere Antonius reached the golden gates,
That blazed twelve labours of Herculean fates,
Patricians, some as trees in autumn's tinge,
Some bent as boughs when wintry snows impinge,
And some in litters borne, as timber bare
Which wains wheel seaward, climbed the Temple's stair:
In groups, with conscious mien, and foreheads mirk,
Brief becks, and whispered hints—" the hour!—the work."
Guards followed, halting on the gradual piles,
The mount all bristled as a cornfield smiles;
Fasces advanced through legionary files,
That after swarmed as wasps round porticos and aisles;
But ere the Consul's train swept through the airy peristyles,
Or gates gan startle at his trumpet's din,
An hundred senators were throned within.

Within, oh what a flood of radiance pours,
Of gems and marbles, elephant and ores,
From columns, caryans, panels, roof, and floors!
Yet neither these—though bright their splendour burst,
As azure clouds in morning's rays immersed,
Or flowers, whose petals to the wind unfold,
With calix outward green and inward gold—
Nor, more, Rome's princes, met as stars by night,
Could first arrest, or long engage, the sight.
A power divine possessed and filled the place.
A God, not present as belief might trace,
Or fancy shape, but there in form and face,
Oh how sublime in beauty, majesty, and grace!
Of size colossal, exquisite of mould,
All poetry could image, art unfold,
Or heaven had there revealed him, present to behold!
High crowned with olive, on an ivory throne,
August, benign, magnificent, alone,
There sat the idol, Jove incorporate with stone.

An hundred cubits high, in human guise:
The vast cell seemed too little, should he rise.
His right hand swayed a sceptre of the skies;

Where ores enamelled like a rainbow blazed,
And from the top a golden eagle gazed;
His left sustained a Victory winged and gemmed,
In ivory carved, with gold, and diademed.
His sandals gold, and chased with jewels shone,
As though the sunrise gleamed beneath his throne:
And gold the robe that floated o'er his knees,
As morning clouds or eve-illumined seas.
The rose and lily wreathed the border sheen,
Where forms inlaid of animals were seen;
There the hart bounded, there the courser neighed,
The wild bull bellowed, and the watchdog bayed.
Four pinioned winds made pillars for his chair,
Each on a globe, that seemed upborne in air.

Earthward the visage of the godhead frowned,
High o'er the capitals of columns crowned,
Whose double ranks the triple aisles divide,
And bear on high the cornice of their pride.
O'er which a caryan attic reigned aloof,
Of female forms, whose foreheads reached the roof.
The roof, bright panels, richly limned, adorn;
(A drama each, of forms in æther borne,)

Save o'er the God, where, through transparent stone,
A flood of light descending wrapt the throne.
Rare gems of curious lustre paved the floor,
In flowery wreaths, with fruits of every shore.
Pilasters faced the wall: each twain between,
Medallions carved, and niches arched, were seen.
And statues beamed in every niche's bower,
Faith, truth, all virtues, and each heavenly power:
Whose fairest groups adorned the grand alcove,
Behind the throne, and seemed the train of Jove;
Where, level with his head, and thence inspired,
The hours, the graces, and the seasons, quired.

Mosaics limned the back, and flanked the throne.
Here, Atlas heaved on high the starry zone;
Seas bathed his feet, and skies oppressed his head;
Alcides near, to bear their weight instead.
There, chained to rifted rocks, Prometheus hangs;
Sea nymphs beneath sing pity for his pangs;
Above, a vulture soars, on pinions spread,
With gaping beak, keen eye, and talons red.
The brilliant back with dreader judgments shone,
That humble hearts, or harden them to stone.

There, rich in empire's robe, and beauty's mien,
The haughty child of Tantalus was seen,
The Pleiads' niece; who bowed her knee to none;
Who dared despise the mother of the sun,
And deemed her daughters lovelier than the moon,
And challenged fortune to revoke its boon.
Seven princes were her sons, her daughters seven,
A king her husband, and her house of Heaven.
Blithe, on the palace lawn, beneath her eye,
They joined in sports, nor deemed destruction nigh;
Some tame the courser, some the quoit beguiles,
And some in choirs and dances won her smiles:
When from his car the red sun stretched a bow,
Shaft after shaft, till every prince lay low.
Their sire, disdaining life, amid them died:
But still seven daughters soothed the mother's pride.
When, from the moon's pale chariot, Dian's dart,
Sped six times sounding, pierced a daughter's heart.
The seventh remained: a child, who fled dismayed,
To reach the mother's knee, and screamed for aid.
She, unrepentant, though appalled, gazed high,
With raven hair thrown back, and faced the sky;
Surprised Heaven could, indignant that it dared,
And mad that godheads such puissance shared,

Yet o'er her infant hovered in despair,
And interposed her robe, her arm, her prayer—
" Oh spare my last, my youngest!"—'twas begun—
" Of all, I ask this one, this youngest one."
Peals the seventh arrow, charged her prayer to mock.
Alone she stands, among her gasping flock;
Pale, silent, breathless, bloodless, at the shock;
Her heart, her eyes, her face, her body, turned to rock.

Of azure steel, inlaid with golden stars,
And beaming as the portal morn unbars,
The throne's broad basis on a plinth reclines,
And seems the floor of heaven distinct with signs.
The plinth was marble, pure as summer's cloud:
There, forms emerged, with more than life endowed.
There, while the sun his chariot curbs on high,
And Dian goads her coursers up the sky,
While Neptune's steeds and Amphitrite's sweep,
With Nereid choirs, and smooth the murmuring deep,
While earth expects, and all of heaven attest,
The spirit of beauty rose from ocean's breast:
Rose, by the muses hymned, adored by love,
And welcomed as divine by every God above.

Such, as still broods o'er seabeat cliffs at noon,
Or robes the woods when murmuring to the moon:
Such, as still emanates from lake and lawn,
To mix with youthful hearts at summer's dawn,
When first they love with wandering streams to stray,
Sigh to the night wind, gaze at parting day,
Or couch by beetling capes, or bowery trees,
And hear the song of billows and the breeze.

Hark, to the shout of clarion, trump, and drums!
Arms clang; gates yawn: 'tis he! the Consul comes.
Throned in the nave the senate rises mute:
Midward he sweeps, scarce answering their salute;
And onward strides, pursued by glittering bands,
Where near the plinth an incense altar stands.
Whose tongue of flame the ritual gift invokes:
There he casts incense: up the perfume smokes:
Thence he returns, and fills the ivory seat,
Throned in the midst beneath the altar's feet.
The senate sit. His train, with haughty glare,
Fasces, and friends, take station round his chair.
And mingled throngs pour in, of each degree,
Each faction, knights and nobles, bond and free,

Morions and plumes from legionary files,
And fill the choir, and fill the lateral aisles;
And, after, filled the portal open thrown,
The porches filled, filled every gradual stone,
Terrace, and mount: where Rome assembled waits,
As summoned to attest the conflict of her fates..

The fane was stilled; each look, each nerve intent.
When, on his throne, the Consul forward bent,
And, brow with reason teeming, arm with force,
And breast with passion, had commenced discourse—
But lo! from far what impulse thrills the fane,
Covert and mute, as fire's electric chain?
Brows change, as viewless breezes skim the main:
Sighs heave; a murmur breaks, suppressed in vain;
The throng dividing forms instinctively a lane;
And fifty senatorial chiefs sweep through it, with their train:
As sweeps the pageant, for a bride to wed,
As succours through a siege to famine sped,
As hopes the crisis brings a lazar's bed,
As dews by western winds to thirsty forests led,
Rome's princes pierced the temple's porch, with Tullius at their head.

In snowy robes, with feet in sandals fair,
And heads low bending towards the ivory chair,
They sought the benches clothed with crimson weft,
And throned their leader, on the Consul's left;
Then sat them round, in dread but simplest state,
By columns, midway from the shrine and gate.
Sound ceases; bosoms throb; and foreheads glare:
Thoughts without utterance and beyond were there.
Now sighs were audible, and hearts that danced
Were almost heard; a spell the fane entranced:
When on his chair again Mark Anthony advanced;
His haughty brow with heavier cares opprest,
His arm more charged, more inly rapt his breast,
And thus his deep-toned voice Rome's senators addressed.

SCENE THE FOURTH.

THE CONSUL.

Ὄμμα γὰρ πυρὸς γέμεις,
Ταῦρος λέοντος ὡς βλέπων πρὸς ἐμβολήν.

" May Jove approve, and every power divine,
Guide, conscript fathers, your resolves and mine!
Consul by office, Anthony by birth,
I claim the assistance of your care and worth,
For Rome's imperial state, the commonwealth of earth.
Dismay o'erhangs us, as a cliff that nods,
Or darkening cloud that threatens men and Gods;
Which save your counsel by their aid dispel,
Ere night o'ershadow who the storm would swell,
The morrow's dawn may witness woes begun,
The Gods shall shrink from, but no mortal shun.
For what, what presage, but the worst to fear?
What sign seems wanting of convulsions near?

None, that arts human for divine install,
Nor this last omen of an empire's fall,
When tales estrange its senate from their chief,
When all his foulest slanderers gain belief,
And they, who should subserve, prescribe his course,
Usurp his power, and counterwork its force.

" For peace, sole bulwark of the senate's cause,
For Rome's defence, her empire, and her law's,
What have I not attempted, what achieved?
What wrongs o'erlooked, what promises believed,
What enmities abjured, what friendships lost?
As casts a bark its burthen tempest tost,
As broods an eagle of its mate bereft,
And loves to cherish all the partner left.
Why am I then pursued with bane and ban?
Why bayed at, as a beast that wars with man?
Eyed, as a snake that folds itself to bite,
Or fowl set high for every shaft to smite?
I speak not yet of arms concealed or known,
For which, in self-defence, this guard is shown;
But slanders, sown as seed with muck combined,
Or winged as thistle-down on every wind,

As though I loathed the senate's voice and vote—
How soothly said, this meeting may denote—
Or grasped at power beyond a Consul's due;
A scandal all my life proclaims untrue.
But, ere I answer this, or trace its source,
And bid who forged it, if he dare, enforce,
Or cite the past to make my merits known,
And with that slanderer's life confront my own,
To show who merits more his country's trust—
First, conscript fathers, hear her woes discussed,
Then judge, whose counsel best may bid them cease,
And what last efforts Rome should make for peace.

" The world beside lies calm in silence yet,
Since Cæsar's fall, as earth when day is set;
Whether the calm of rest to sleep propense,
Or that dread pause ere hurricanes commence.
From farthest seas by evening's sun inflamed,
Where broods Britannia, like a swan reclaimed;
O'er purple hills that hem the Rhone and Rhine,
Fair fruit of Cæsar's fame, and seed of mine;
Through vales, whence Spain her nascent tribute wafts,
As the wild olive with its fruitful grafts;

By Lusitania's headlands steeped in foam,
To where earth failed the conquering steps of Rome;
All thrill at Cæsar's fate, with wonder dumb,
And wait the mandates from this mount to come:
Mandates, our camps as oracles install,
And Lepidus now bears to farthest Gaul,
Pollio to Spain; whence Pompey's son withdraws,
To rule Rome's fleet, and teach the sea her laws.

"Afric, as mute, from deserts to the main,
From Nile to Atlas, heeds the Roman's rein,
Alike where wielded by a prætor's hand,
Or monarchs, tools of servitude, command.
And while the blows on Cæsar's breast resound
Through Syria, Asia, and Bithynia's bound;
Though there Bithynia's king has seized a throne
Ere Cæsar gave it, or his gift was known;
Yet Cæsar's books that gift have ratified,
And there, as everywhere, for peace provide.
And what, though Asia's wealth Trebonius aid,
By Cæsar given, ere Cæsar felt his blade;
What, though his arms in Syria Cassius belt,
To brave recoil of blows on Cæsar dealt;

Can either doubt to leave his province free,
When Dolabella comes with Rome's decree?
Who, deemed my colleague after Cæsar's end,
And at the senate's instance made my friend,
Speeds, as a Titan, with the people's choice,
To arm the east; lest faction lift her voice,
Or Parthia arms, by Labienus led,
Where that last friend of Pompey begs his bread.

"As rivers clamour by a tempest crost;
As hives distracted mourn their parent lost;
As chargers struggle with the bit they champ;
So throes, so threats, each Macedonian camp,
Where legions five, by Cæsar marshalled forth,
Waited his coming to o'erwhelm the north;
When this, like many a bold and bright design,
Burst, with his heart, before your eyes and mine.
South of these bulwarks, Greece inglorious smiles,
Fond of herself, and tranquil as the isles;
Northward, dismay as wind in winter screams,
Till Ister trembles through his hundred streams,
And Alps and Rhodope their echoes blend—
Who dares dispute the mandate Rome shall send?

" But Italy!—'tis here we ail, 'tis here!
And oh, what ailment like the heart's to fear?
What waste, like fire a household hearth may spread?
What wreck, as when earth trembles where we tread?
Alas! my country, arbitress of earth,
Thou nurse or mother of each art and worth,
Whose arms have conquered, morals have refined,
Examples raised and dignified, mankind;
Whose manners charm them, monuments adorn,
And laws and letters illustrate, as morn;
Oh Rome! who citest monarchs to thy bar,
Rome! who prohibitest the world to war,
And renderest justice, and imposest peace!—
Boons, reft of which the human race must cease,
But boons the Gods neglected to provide,
And men till now have never long supplied!
This Rome now emulates an anarch's part,
Arms her own hands to eviscerate her heart,
Relumes the camp whose fiery flag she furled,
And loosens spoil and war to waste the world.

" Veterans revolt; bands rove; insurgents rise:
Cisalpine Gaul to arms, to battle, cries:

Campania's plains with mustering legions fill;
The Fourth at Trebia dares defy my will:
The Martian's camp on Alba's mountain waits,
And menaces to storm the Roman gates.
Night burns on every hill with beacons wild;
Day glistens girt with steel and dust defiled.
Some have forsworn their duty, some forgot,
Some fled, some flung the fasces—I have not.
To Rome, her people's power, and consuls' sway,
Let these abandon it and those betray,
Let him, who dares, defy—who can, subdue—
I Consul and Antonius still am true.
And Gallia's ramparts shall be crushed as corn,
And Capua's camp dissolve as mist at morn,
If Mutina for Decius bar her towers,
Or beardless Cæsar mete his sword with ours.
For shouts of myriads from Brundusium sound,
As waters pent in mountains chide their bound:
Where, when they burst, shall nether vales abide?
Or whose the hand can gather back the tide?

"Yet peace is sweet, as port when winds increase;
Child never cherished home as I love peace.

For war has splendours, but as flame by night;
And ah the morrow of a fire or fight!
Shall Rome have peace? All other hopes are past:
Yet one remains; one only, 'tis the last—
'Tis yours to try or spurn what I suggest;
'Tis, conscript fathers, yours to stand its test—
'Tis this—Let your decree the Consul's nerve!
Instruct the Fourth and Martian whom to serve!
Claim, while they hesitate, their faith for Rome,
As night recalls each wandering creature home.
So shall this city fence herself with spears,
So Capua's veterans tremble when she hears,
So Cæsar's quellers, now to exile driven,
Shall hold each province Rome to each has given,
I seek mine own: new consuls take their year;
And peace rule earth, as order rules the sphere.
On this small pivot's point the world is weighed.
Heed, conscript fathers, how the scales are swayed!
Give me thus far your confidence and aid,
Or answer Gods and men for having both betrayed.

" Who am I?—what by service, what by birth,
To merit this of Rome, yourselves, and earth?

Are mine forefathers unenrolled by fame,
Whom jeers and mock extraction join to name,
Part from a Volscian king forsooth to fetch,
Part from a sire whose visage bore a vetch?
Where stands the hall with princelier statues graced?
Where, in whose annals more of Rome's is traced?
Where, of her heroes more to heaven allied?
Or more earth greets with gratitude and pride?
Even in those arts a Roman should contemn,
He, whose sole worth, sole influence, lies in them,
He ne'er stole graces from a nobler source,
Than when he apes my grandfather's discourse;
That thankless victim to the senate's cause,
Whose blood reft Marius of the world's applause.

" What then—'tis said—does worth descend by race?
Does mind transmit its features like the face?
Yes—if my thought be asked, I answer—yes.
But all must bless descent at least for this,
To fire ambition, fix the standard high,
Nurse honour, give examples, hold them nigh,
Take pledges safe for instituting youth,
And lure its passions to the cause of truth.

These are my hostages, by birth conveyed,
To Rome; these never has my life betrayed;
These charm the generous, and assure the wise,
And only he who lacks them dares despise.
Of race coeval with my country's birth,
No village vetch, no weed of fuller's earth,
I vouch Rome's annals, to attest my claim,
And time, which never heard my slanderer's name.

" Trace, conscript fathers, trace my life's career!
'Tis signed, as beams the planetary sphere.
The eccentric star of youth may errors own,
But mine ne'er sallied forth of glory's zone.
Nor has my memory thence regrets to bear,
Save what my father's faults, or nature's, share.
Rome was my school, till travel gave release,
And lured nor long entangled me in Greece;
Nor there abandoned to the muse's charms,
But mixed her arts with exercise of arms.
Nor brought me back to palter in the laws,
But sped where kings were clients, Rome's the cause.
Called by Gabinius I to Syria rushed,
And taught his horsemen how a host is crushed,

His foot how walls are mounted, ramparts broke,
And Judah's monarchs how to bear their yoke.
Egypt came next his sceptre to regain:
When neither seers, who forged the Sybils strain,
Nor sands, Serbonian bogs, the Typhon's breath,
Nor Nile with camps and navies threatening death,
Turned me from crowning Ptolemy their King.
From whose revenge 'twas mine his realm to wring;
Mine to give conquest, stay the conqueror's sword,
Restrain the hate of exiles I restored,
Of rival kings adjudicate the doom,
And render this a throne and that a tomb.
Thus dawned my youth. Who is it chides my noon?
And lifts his rushlight for my guide a boon?
Bids you beware, and threatens me with wrath,
Lest thus illumed I deviate from the path,
That mounts to glory's fane? By every God,
I know the temple, and the path have trod.

" Nor left, when westward from the east I sped,
And met the conquering host from Britain led.
Quæstor by Rome, by Cæsar legate made,
What meeds I won, what services I paid,

When Gaul and Vercingetorix were chained,
To name is needless, and to vaunt disdained:
Faction may carp, pride doubt, and envy doat,
But every age shall read what Cæsar wrote.
Nor be it mine but history's task to blaze
Whate'er I since achieved for earth to praise,
While stage on stage I mounted honour's hill,
And passed each climax to the throne I fill.
For those were years so fierce in faction's heat,
And here from adverse camps so many meet,
And some whose cheeks, though long as ashes pale,
Hide hearts like burning coals those ashes veil:
Such embers, tread who chooses, I would shun:
And passing say but this, to outrage none;
Tribune of Rome, vicegerent of the globe,
I bore each office to adorn its robe;
Pride never turned me from the poor opprest;
I honoured worth however born or drest:
Fear never swayed my mind from right to wrong;
I aided Cæsar weak, I thwarted strong,
Augur I made religion's rite his care,
And soldier claimed in spoil a comrade's share.
Else, like him, bounteous as the spring in peace,
In war a tempest swift but soon to cease,

I tempered justice, and I spared the sword:
Witness those exiles Rome through me restored!
Witness the foes whose fetter I have riven,
Could they forgive my having them forgiven.
But if one stigma, debt, has stained my life,
Thanks to a thriftless house and worthless wife,
Did not retrenchment raze the blot they made,
That wife divorced, and all her dower repaid?
And if force furnished once the public cause,
By means still used when arms have silenced laws,
Arms and the Gods should warrant what they force,
If amnesty be aught but vain discourse.
Then leave the past, for history to decide!
We come too soon to laud it, late to chide.
Ours is the present: conscript fathers, scan
What have I Consul done for Rome and man,
Your confidence to win, and perfect what I plan.

" Here must I, e'en with tears, recall the time,
When—ah dread deed! and I had added crime,
But noblest Romans share its praise or blame,
Whom still with honour and respect I name—
When Cæsar, magistrate supremest ranked,
Consul, Dictator, Pontiff, sacrosanct,

Father of Rome, her ruler and the globe's,
Throned, crowned with laurel, in triumphal robes,
By men in guise of friends, in suppliants' guise,
In office stoled, before the senate's eyes,
Before the all seeing Gods, was sudden snared,
And stabbed with thirty dirks from covert bared,
And slain, at Pompey's feet, whose statue he had spared.
Where, when I saw him prone, with muffled face,
As bleeds a bullock at the altar's base,
I, who had followed and forbid his fate,
But false Trebonius stayed me out the gate;
Which when I entering saw what crazed my sight,
Like some dire dream that haunts me still by night,
I fled, as from the wreck of heaven and earth,
And reached my house, and fortified its girth.
For Lepidus led troops from Tyber's isle,
And hired gladiators seized this hill the while;
But embassies for terms descended still,
To him, and me, from those who held the hill;
Rome wailing as a maid her sire's decease;
Till groans for vengeance stifled prayers for peace;—
Who soothed those groans? who ratified the prayer?
Though swords began to clash, and torches glare;

Who stepped between, the quarrel to atone,
And ratified the prayer, and pacified the groan?

" 'Twas I. I did it. Bonds of blood forbade,
And bonds of oath—though these all Romans had—
But office bound me, me my life's success:
While who feared Cæsar liked his slaughter less;
Veterans gan throng, with clamours and alarms,
Attesting scars, and indicating arms;
Each camp, each province, seemed to swell their suit,
And o'er the bier Calpurnia bending mute:
Yet, for I feared all human ties to rive,
By wars, which none save victors could survive;
And deemed my care o'er all, like nature's, spread;
Nor dared love less the living than the dead;
At once Rome's senate I resolved to call,
And make their counsels arbiters of all.

" Earth saw that senate summoned to her fane.
But with them came—what feuds and factions vain!
The means invoked for peace had peace destroyed,
Doomed Cæsar tyrant, and his edicts void,
But I exclaimed—Beware! you sap a base,
Whereon the world's foundations hold their place.

For years, what office but through his had force?
What law, league, rite, but Cæsar was the source?
How many here through him alone have seat?
Beware! and mine not where you set your feet.

"Words, poured as oil on waters raging high.
Fears fled, as clouds when zephyrs cleanse the sky.
For peace all craved the example, and were shown;
With Dolabella's hand I joined my own:
You sanctioned all that Cæsar penned for laws,
And of his death bade none inquire the cause.
His quellers left the mount they guarded still;
I sent my son, their hostage, to the hill;
Brutus with Lepidus went home to rest;
And Cassius supped with me; and all was blest.

"The funeral urn had scarce entombed the clay,
Which late embodied Rome's imperial sway;
Scarce had that name, whose echoes earth appalled,
Thrice, with supreme adieu, been vainly called;
When I of Concord's Temple oped the gate,
And held Rome's senate there, to fix her fate.
Thee, Goddess, thee, beneath whose form we met,
Since else the Gods and mortals all forget,

Thee, I attest! of mine no efforts failed,
No care seemed wanting, where my country ailed.
Omit my vows to bring the banished home,
My laws to guard the revenues of Rome;
Omit what grace for absence Brutus gained,
Omit what charge for Cassius was ordained,
What missions for his friends, what power's increase;
Omit all edicts else I moved for peace:
But what, what was it, baned the world's repose,
As shame consumes the bosom where it glows?
What—as a goitre yokes the neck with death,
Deforms the beauty, and constrains the breath,
Of him whose life the bloodsucker absorbs—
What wen so clasped Rome's empire and the orb's?
To inflate its power with all that others owed,
And choke the weal whose shoulders it bestrode:
Office, which Rome when needing ill could brook,
Which envy haunted with a serpent's look,
Which made ambition mad, as youth in lust,
And craved more virtue than mankind's to trust;
Summit, achieved by years of toil and strife,
Dangerous to guard or leave except with life;
Prize, which provoked more perils than it chased,
And ruined most where most its radiance graced,

And oh when most adorned the deadliest dower—
Like wit's precocious flame or beauty's flower—
The Dictatorial name! the Dictatorial power!

" Hell had its roots, the branches pierced to noon.
Rome in their shadow, as in earth's the moon,
Dark and ensanguined lay, while ages rolled.
In vain to raze it toiled the wise and bold;
The trunk they scarcely shook their dust manured,
Though fruit or foliage changed, the growth endured.
Till Consul and Antonius I up stood,
And smote its base, as woodmen smite the wood,
Razed trunk and root, with more than man's endeavour,
Razed the Dictator's power and name forever.
And now no woman fears for freedom's poise,
Lest Rome succumb to servants she employs,
None, save who heed a croaking raven's noise,
Or feign alarm for peace their guilt alone destroys,
Or leave their Consul's guidance for a sophist's and a boy's.

" One woe remained. Ye heard the veterans' cries!
Who desperate swarmed in Rome, as famished flies,
And claimed reward for scars in many a fight;
Claims two great Gods supported, power, and right.

I stilled their voices, and enfranchised ours.
I satisfied their rights, I soothed their powers:
I colonized the plain Campania flowers,
From Casilinum's wall to Capua's towers;
Where trellises of vines now wreath the veterans' bowers;
Nor more Rome startles at their cry, nor more the senate cowers.
Though Cæsar's troops, there planted, raged in vain,
And Capua braved me and had almost slain:
Crime I must wreak, and Capua learn to rue;
Aye, Capua's walls shall learn the atonement due,
From who dare arm Rome's Consul to pursue,
And threaten in his blood their daggers to imbrue.

"And thus, ere now, had danger fled as dreams,
And peace returned, as morn when April teems,
But like a frost in spring Octavius came,
A boy in years, a Cæsar but in name,
Unripe of form, but hard and hoar of mind,
As winter's ice, and withering as its wind.
Who without office, auspices, or choice,
The senate's edict, or the people's voice,
Against all sanctions human and divine,
Usurps command, bands legions, wheedles mine,

Corrupts the people, senators befools,
And in this temple has his dupes and tools;
Buzzards, who flutter where a serpent charms,
Idiots, who look for peace from lawless arms,
For freedom look by Rome's subjection won;
And while they curse the father, court the son,
Present him hands with Cæsar's blood defiled,
And, for their friend and champion, hail the child,
Hope he may reverence ties the world condemn,
And traitor to his sire be true to them.
Who, like the horse, unused to goad and girth,
Till leagued with man to hunt the stag from earth,
Stand bridled, saddled, and their knees would bend,
To mount a rider that can ne'er descend:
Whose bit their frothy mouth should champ in vain,
Whose goading heel their flank forever stain,
Whose gear and girth no lassitude could rid;
By him your necks and Rome's were long ago bestrid,
And not a finger checked him, not a murmur chid,
But Consul and Antonius I forbade, and shall forbid.

" Such, conscript fathers, such my years have past;
So coursed the lists of glory far and fast;

Such are my claims by counsels, arms, and birth;
And such my service done to Rome and earth.
And such the service future need foresees,
Nor dares expect from any hands but these.
'Tis by such meeds I merit, and I crave,
Your aid, your country and yourselves to save.
Nor were, I ween, this challenge made in vain,
But for one wight—whom I must now arraign.

" Famed, Marcus Tullius, as thou art too well,
For heart malign, foul tongue, and temper fell;
Yet since their vollies, long in secret nursed,
On me in absence like a fire have burst;
And Rome combustive teems, as straw in store;
And earth can bear thy petulance no more;
Thee I arraign: to read a lesson stern,
Or make a warning for the world to learn—
Words are a game which man may lose and live,
Yet two can play it, and who takes will give;
But treason games with blood no less than breath,
A game of desperate chances, life or death!
For Rome, her Consul leagues with men and Gods,
For thee, great powers of rhetoric—desperate odds!
Weigh yet thy fate; see where its balance nods;
And recollect 'tis I now wield the axe and rods.

" Why am I doomed thus ever to contend
With thee, alike insidious, foe or friend?
Whose discipline albeit my youth professed,
Whose house long loved, thy pupil, and thy guest.
In thankless souls, 'tis true, no bounty thrives,
And some have slaughtered him who spared their lives;
Yet ere such favour turned thy heart ingrate,
Ere thanks were earned, I suffered by thy hate.
When Fadia's lawsuit with thy friend was heard—
A cause the tribune's power in vain deferred,
In vain friends gathered, when the crisis came,
The truth to witness, and the right to claim—
We found thee purchased, truth and right to wrench,
And cursed a venal bar, and twaddling bench.

" Sharp was the loss, yet no resentment craved:
I after sought him, served, and fain had saved:
Braving the din of arms, and Forum's din,
To woo his heart, if services could win.
Since first I gave the Augurship he craved,
My own pretensions dropped, and canvass waived;
Till, after victory stood on faction's neck,
I met him flying from Pharsalia's wreck,
And in Brundusium's gate with veterans rife,
Though there I earned no glory, saved his life.

Pale at our feet, and prone to lick their dust,
Midst troops, that smarted still with many a thrust,
Him I dismissed, unscathed of life or limb,
No thanks deserved of Rome, and none received of him.

" Yourselves have heard his menace pour for thanks,
Since Cæsar's fall, as torrents burst their banks;
Yourselves have seen, as tides of Adria roll,
So fear and hate of peace distract his soul.
What but fear hastened hence his flight to Greece?
What sped him hither thence but hate of peace?
Yet can this blusterer change his mood at choice,
With all that seeming pomp of front and voice;
And, versatile as wax the moulder warms,
Can mollify his style, and turn its forms.
Nor am I always menaced thus and schooled,
But sometimes praised, and he may think befooled.
As these his letters witness. Hear them read!
His own hand answers half his lips have said.

' Tullius to Anthony the Consul greeting!
Would thou hadst mentioned, at a personal meeting,
The wish thy letters have in absence shown,
For then, not only had my words made known,

But even my manner, countenance and mien,
Had made the love I bare thee throughly seen.
For hitherto thou hast my friendship won,
By kindness first, and then by service done;
But Rome's Republic so commends thee now,
That none stand nearer to my heart than thou.
Indeed, thy letters come so kindly penned,
They seem to ask less favour than they send;
To bring my foe, thy banished stepson, back,
With my consent, which thou canst little lack.
I give it—take, my Anthony, and deem
I feel me honoured by such marked esteem:
Deem this consent thy due by every right,
As 'tis my nature's, and my heart's, to plight.
For there no thoughts morose nor bitter breed,
Nor even severe, beyond my country's need.
Hate beyond that ne'er mingled in my strife
With Clodius' father; and I wished through life
To spare the friends of foes, the more if weak,
And leave my friends the same defence to seek.
For him, the son—'tis, as thou writest, thine
To train his age from enmity with mine.
His sire and I contended oft, as known,
I, for the public cause, and he, his own:

The public judged us. If he lived to day,
All cause of contest now were past away.
Then since thou askest what belongs to thee,
Nor would'st bestow the boon till I agree,
Bestow it, if thou wilt, as if it came from me.
Not that my age of his can harm surmise,
Nor that my rank from any conflict flies,
But that thyself and I may better be allies.
For, since that quarrel, I have grieved to see
Thy heart more open than thy house to me.
So much for that. This only need accrue:
Whate'er thou wilt, where willing is thy due,
That shall I never doubt with ardour to pursue.
Of this be thoroughly assured, I pray thee, and adieu.'

" Why, after this, should I his praise disclose,
That flattered me when Rome a quæstor chose?
When I with arms was following in his train,
To guard his head, or many a mob had ta'en:
Praise, older than his hate of Cæsar's power;
For here, to Cæsar since he ceased to cower,
These letters so attest my fame and blaze,
Alike are hence his censure and his praise.

Of praise, what can I covet more than here?
And after this what censure need I fear?

"Yet who, who hopes exemption from those lips,
Whose honey dew with gall, with venom, drips?
Lips, which ne'er balked a vow to gain its end,
Nor lost a foolborn jest to spare a friend;
Which mocked e'en him they flattered to his fall,
Nor slavered Pompey more with sweets than gall.
Who, that once loved the mocker, loves him still?
Who of the dead e'er named him in their will?
Paid him that last of offices on earth,
That proof supreme of love, and test of worth.
What ties can bind him, or what house can hold?
Who late divorced the wife with whom he had grown old,
Then, to excuse her, and avenge I ween,
Espoused his ward for pelf, and since dismissed for spleen.

"But haply public feats inflate his tone:
And 'tis his Consulship that shames my own!
Forsooth, when Rome was racked with false alarms;
When bondmen swarmed this capitol in arms;
When spies discovered more than foes designed,
And plots though black were blackened by his mind;

And when, as beeves a butcher culls at sale,
He led Rome's noblest through her streets to gaol:
And issuing thence her sorrows deigned assuage,
In kin and friends, each sex and every age,
Crowds, which with tears pursued him to inquire,
This for a brother, that a son or sire,
Till with his proud and pedant phrase dismissed,
Which like a poniard pierced—'they did exist!'
Certes, then empire held its glass to earth,
For men to mould themselves to Roman worth!
Then, for example, then was Rome new born!
Year, more than blest in vintage, oil, and corn!
Thrice blest in victory, liberties, and laws,
That claimed the world's and won his own applause.
For toils of study well supplied the camp's,
And power's brief day survived in midnight lamps,
Which pranked self praise to supersede renown's,
In—oh! mellifluous verse—'Yield arms to gowns!'
As if Rome saw her fields for slaughter farmed,
Not awed by terror, but by rhetoric charmed,
And gownsmen did it, and not bondmen armed.

"What! has conceit besotted so thy mind,
Is thy small sect and smaller soul so blind,

That neither conscience has the truth inured,
Nor years, nor woes so childishly endured,
Nor exile's pain, nor forfeit rank, made known,
Nor forfeit life so thanklessly thine own,
Nor have the Gods themselves by these their judgments shown,
What secret curses overwhelmed thy head,
When Rome beneath thy fasces wept and bled?
Curses, whose doom has dogged thee from that year,
Though mute as bloodhounds snuff the destined deer.
For oh! midst heaps the groaning stairs displayed,
Of bloodshot corpses, headlong thrown to fade,
With broken neck, and welts the cord had wrung,
Eyes gushing wide, and froth-encircled tongue,
Lay chiefs, of race the noblest time renown's;
Lay knights, unquelled till arms gave way to gowns;
Lay one, who once had swayed the axe and rods,
Had graced this ivory throne—Immortal Gods!
Graced the high throne by Tullius then defiled.
Yes, there my step-sire lay, with felons piled,
Denied—oh shame!—his last funereal rite,
Denied, what foes, what savages requite,
What even his guilt however great might crave,
What none withholds the beggar or the slave,

A pyre, by flame to quicken death's decay,
Or grave, to shroud from sight the festering clay.

" 'Twas not enough no court his cause arraigned—
Unheard he perished, as a beast is brained;
'Twas not enough no pause pursued arrest—
He sunk, as corn the reaper's span had prest;
But thine was vengeance neither life could term,
Nor death, it preyed on carrion with the worm;
Robbed being of its boon, without remorse,
And, like a hyen, disenterred the corse.
Oh stain, oh plague spot, in the roll of years!
To which what Roman turns, except with tears,
Except with shame for wrongs his country bore,
Except with oaths to suffer such no more.

" Next, reft of empire's axe he seized the knife,
With Milo's hand, and struck at Clodius' life;
For joy, too great for Tullius to conceal,
Proved his the heart that whetted Milo's steel.
A deed, deemed safer to suggest than share,
And found even harder to defend than dare.
Not all the rhetoric tricks of Tullius kenned,
The speech he stammered, and the speech he penned,

Nor Pompey's guards by every temple set,
Could screen the assassin, or make Rome forget,
What justice claimed, when blood from Clodius flowed,
Where his great fathers paved the Appian road.
Alas! the accomplice, who devised the deed,
And shirked the peril, spared himself its meed,
But he, who armed lest Rome should mutine wroth,
And rend the assassin and accomplice both,
Pompey but needed think the accomplice true,
And trust his words, to give revenge its due.
Never was bird so lured, to leave its mate,
By tame decoy that praised the fowler's bait,
Nor ship by reckless pilot steered from port,
To war with winds and perish in their sport,
Nor traveller led o'er cliffs to death's descent,
By vapour's lamp, or crocodile's lament;
Than, lured and led by Tullius, Pompey fell,
And left his father, and his friend, for hell;
Left Rome, and fortune—all that man could choose,
For Grecian camps; to hazard all, and lose,
Even to the shadowy worth of past report:
To flee for life, for faith explore a court,
A monarch's heart for gratitude explore;
Cry—'who seeks refuge at a tyrant's door

When once he enters there is free no more!'
And stretch a headless trunk on Egypt's sounding shore.

" Thou didst it, thou! E'en less by death was done
In Julia's tomb, to sever sire and son.
Less e'en did envy's seed, or flattery's growth,
To turn friends rivals, less, to slaughter both,
The welcome Egypt sent the son's distress,
The knives Rome ambushed for the sire did less,
Than did thy counsels false, and tongue malign,
To ruin both their lives, for harbouring thine.
Thou didst it, thou! For Pompey loved repose,
And Cæsar peace: 'twas thine to make them foes;
To sow distrust, and till, as corn in dearth,
Fan every fear, and warm thee at its hearth,
Invoke Rome's power, to subject it to thine,
And wrap the world in flames, for thee to shine.
Oh! had'st thou learned, by one experience sage,
How ill camps suited with thine arts and age—
Where the wight wandered with a peevish scowl,
Or perched in gloom, ill boding as an owl;
Where late he entered, and repented soon,
Nor found employ but playing the buffoon,

And sowing discontent in many a jeer,
As when, for instance, Nonius bade him cheer—
' For lo! ten eagles still defend our cause!'
' 'Twere well,' cried Tullius, ' if we warred with daws.'
Thus doubting, scorning, mocking all he found,
In bitterness of soul his jest went round,
Till Pompey shunned it, as a taunt from hell,
And would have silenced, but he fought and fell.
Oh had the fall of friends whom Tullius jeered,
Or sway of foes he flattered when he feared,
Or had their pardon of his forfeit life,
But made him wise to shrink from social strife,
And wield thenceforth the style, and war with speech,
Nor grasp state matters, far beyond his reach:
Or if no power nor pardon had the force,
Would Rome's best born had shunned his intercourse;
Or Brutus scorned to follow with the rest,
What yon assassin could alone suggest,
Nor learned to cloak a dagger in his vest.

" Aye, learned of him. That tragedy of blood
Sprung from his heart, the fountain of the flood.
Nameless in vain the author's style is tracked;
He penned the drama, though he dared not act.

'Twas like him; like whate'er his vaunts evince;
His deeds when Consul, and his dogmas since.
But more, the scene itself proclaimed him out—
Who, that beheld it, could forget or doubt?
When from the ring round Cæsar Brutus came,
Whom still with honour and respect I name,
Held up his dagger reeking from the blow,
And hailed, and shouted, Tullius Cicero!
And wished him joy for liberty restored.
A clear admission—he had all explored!
But more to argue this were waste of breath;
He owns, as bad a crime, he wished the death;
Wished, as for food, to witness Cæsar bleed;
In heart, each day, was guilty of the deed;
Nor wanted words, for them he never lacked,
But, what through life he wanted, hands to act.

" Enough! thy term is touched; thy measure filled.
Rome by my voice enjoins thee—peace! be stilled!
Be satisfied with blood long poured as water.
Cease to devote Rome's noblemen to slaughter:
Cease with their gore her senate-house to spot:
For earth has drunk enough, if thou hast not.

Hence work at words, con speeches and rehearse;
Go, rack thy midnight brains for scabrous verse;
Coin pedant phrases, ape the Grecian schools,
And claim the world's applause, and win the fool's.
Those are thy glories; there thy labours shine:
But empire, arms, the rods and axe are mine.
And Pompey's camp shall nevermore be lit,
Nor Pompey's party for a senate sit,
Nor oligarchs again their faction knit,
For thee to exercise thy strategy or wit:
That—Consul and Antonius I will never more permit.
Though Cæsar's foes thy consulship should claim,
And young Octavius lend it Cæsar's name.

"You, conscript fathers, you once more I warn,
Beware yon wight's discourse, his counsel scorn,
His doom avoid! Yours now must be the choice
Whose fates to follow, whose advice and voice.
Recall the past: review his life and line,
Camps, conquests, counsels; and contrast with mine.
Who, who would see his consulship renewed?
His gown again with Roman blood bedewed?
And see his victims, as of late, or yore,
Strewn on the felon's stair, or senate's floor?

Think, conscript fathers, think how sweet is peace:
Think, your resolves shall bid it live or cease:
Think, what my birth, my services, and fame,
And station pledge to merit what I claim:
Think, what new meeds the future may fulfil:
Think, I am Consul and Antonius still:
And give the edict, give the example due,
To teach Rome's camps what chief they should pursue.
Whether some soldier Cæsar's blood has laved,
Or gownsman fled from Pompey's rout and saved,
Or boy, who borrows Cæsar's name for plea,
As though power passed by will and pedigree;
Or him, whom Rome declares her Consul, me!
Whom men and Gods have raised the year to sway.
'Tis, conscript fathers, yours to answer this to-day.
May every God enlighten you, and man no more betray."

Antonius ceased at once and Tullius rose.
While mingled murmurs burst from friends and foes,
As when a swelling stream breaks up, which winter froze.
And, as when glaciers strike an isle sublime,
Climb round its base, and crumble where they climb,
So Tullius towered, while hostile clamours swelled,
And friendly hands had dragged him down and held,

But stern his glance rebuked their idle cares,
And raised to loftier fates than his or theirs.
Forth from his friends a single stride he trod,
Then turned, and faced the Consul, and the God.
And then rose cheers, not many, nor elate,
But heaved from hearts devoted to his fate.
And though, save these, and some of adverse will,
At first the senate listened pale and still,
Part from distrust, but more from fear's control;
While yet he checked the sallies of his soul,
As on a chariot yoked to coursers seven;
Yet when wheels bounded, as from earth to heaven,
And soared, with loosened reins, a blazing star,
And trailed all after, captives to his car:
When, rapt with power of more than mortal tone,
He pierced each soul and planted there his own;
Wielding right reason as a monarch's rod,
And passion's torch as kindled of a God:
Then seemed the fasces at his feet to bow,
A crown of flame seemed seated on his brow,
Seemed, as the spirit that directs the storm,
Transferred to him, forsook the idol's form.
And wide and wider circling cheers gan swell,
As foams a fountain from a deep dug well,

Till each aisle caught it, till the clamorous cell,
Portal and porch, each gradient parallel,
Terrace, and hill, and Rome, sent up a multitudinous yell.
Each soldier shrunk, as though his arm were maimed;
Their swords fell blunted, and their visage shamed;
As slinks the mountain wolf a wizard's spell has tamed.
And not a hand more dared have risen for force,
To still or stem that torrent of discourse,
Than dares the brute with man's artillery vie,
Or man with God's, when thunder shakes the sky.

But ere the lips, persuasion hung, unclosed,
Silence, her herald, every wave composed,
Mute as the main that fossil caves comprise.
A sea of heads on Tullius fixed their eyes.
Who raised his brow, and gathering up his robe,
Gazed round a senate that o'erawed the globe:
His left hand bore the border of his gown,
Forth from its gorge his dexter arm hung down:
When thus, with eyes dilate, and heart incensed,
As peals a distant storm, the orator commenced.

SCENE THE FIFTH.

THE PHILIPPIC.

Ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἂν ἀστράπτῃ πόσις Ἥρης ἠϋκόμοιο,
Τεύχων ἢ πολὺν ὄμβρον ἀθέσφατον, ἠὲ χάλαζαν,
Ἢ νίφετον, ὅτε πέρ τε χιὼν ἐπάλυνεν ἀρούρας,
Ἠέ ποθι πτολέμοιο μέγα στόμα πευκεδανοῖο.

I.

" By what my fate, since twenty years have past,
Still, conscript fathers, is it thus forecast,
That Rome's Republic ne'er a foe can see
But who the selfsame moment wars with me?
Nor need I name them: you in thought have named.
They paid me forfeits, greater than I claimed;
And much I marvel, one should now intend
The deed they dared, nor tremble at their end.
Still none of them my enmity pursued,
'Twas I on Rome's behalf began the feud:

But thou, Antonius, anxious to surpass
Clodius in fury, Cataline in brass,
Provoked by nothing I had done or said,
Hast picked this quarrel, and the onset sped,
By heaping all abuse, all insult, on my head.
And thus hast hoped thine interest to commend,
And win Rome's foes, by outraging her friend.
Why, what means this? Am I so far despised?
In service done, in influence exercised,
Rank held, and talents at an average prized,
I nothing find but should itself exempt,
Methinks, at least from Anthony's contempt.
And were no hearers found so prone to please
By slandering me, as here in senate, these,
Whose thanks for serving Rome have others known,
But I for having saved, and I alone?
Or would'st thou vie with me in rhetoric's art,
And measure swords in wit? With all my heart:
What happier choice of terms could fate infuse,
Than I defend myself, and Anthony accuse?
But no! this onslaught has the guiltier reason;
'Tis to show traitors that his aims are treason.
Yet, ere his public charges meet reply,
Some private griefs there are I would deny,

Deeming them crimes too serious to be slighted,
His friendship wronged, and favours ill requited.

II.

" I crossed his interest in some suit:—Indeed!
Against a stranger, for a friend to plead;
Against intrigues, that trampled worth and truth,
To snuff the flower of prostituted youth;
Against foul wrong, when Fadia's tribune did
What courts refused,—to plead, could aught forbid?
'Twas but to captivate Rome's vilest sect
This theme was broached; that all might recollect
Thy wife the daughter, and, if hers are thine,
Thy sons the grandsons, of a libertine.

" But then he learned my discipline a lad,
And loved my house:—Ah, happier if he had!
There, had he better kept unsullied youth,
And manly fame. But no; 'tis not the truth.
The wish was worthier than thou could'st conceive;
Nor, hadst thou wished, would Curio give thee leave.

" Mine augurship was gained at thine expense: —
And said'st thou so? Ah matchless impudence!
Me augur Pompey and Hortensius named,
As but two could, though all the college claimed,
When debt, insolvent debt, disfranchised thee,
And nothing but thy country's fall could free.
And what pretensions, what, couldst thou affect,
Curio abroad? Or after, when elect,
Couldst thou have carried one of all the tribes,
Without his interest, nay, without his bribes?
Whose friends have since been challenged by the laws,
And suffered fine, for riots in thy cause.

III.

" But then the favours done me: —What, and where?
Though some I always have professed there were;
For that I feared ungrateful to be thought,
And rather owned a debt I never ought.
But what, what favour would thy taunts denote?
Thou didst not at Brundusium cut my throat!
Him, whom the victor, and, 'twas then thy boast,
The lord, that raised thee o'er his ruffian host,

Him, whose return, whose welcome Cæsar willed,
Couldst thou have intercepted, thou have killed?
But grant thou couldst: what favour is't I owe?
Save, conscript fathers, such as thieves bestow,
Who claim thanksgiving for a bloodless theft,
And think they gave whatever life they left.
But were this favour, they, who greatly dared
To stab the despot who their lives had spared,
Men thou must still with praise and honour name,
Had never won their now immortal fame.
For what the mighty merit to forbear
Thy hands from murder? By the Gods, I swear,
I feel less pleasure thou hadst not the will,
Than sorrow that thou hadst the power, to kill.

" But since a robber can no greater give,
'Tis by thy favour, granted, that I live.
Where canst thou say my gratitude has failed?
Was such the obligement by thy gift entailed,
That I must sit and see my country's fate,
Nor dare complain, lest thou shouldst cry ingrate?
In which complaint, so sad and sore, 'tis true,
But from the where Rome stationed me so due,

What word, what tone, was uttered to offend?
What not with mildness? what unlike a friend?
Yet how was temperance tasked, complaint to broach
Of thee, Mark Anthony, and spare reproach!
When the last forms of freedom were dispersed;
When place was sold in public to the worst;
When laws, nought sanctioned but thy will and weal,
Came forth; when Consul thou hadst mocked appeal,
When augur auspices; when armed men
(Rome's last disgrace) begirt thy side; and when
Thy deeds obscene of wantonness and wine
Defiled a house too pure for thee and thine.
Yet I, as if no bravo gave the affront,
But Marcus Crassus, who of old was wont,
I, mourning bitterly my country's doom,
Said nothing, nothing, of the man by whom.
For which forbearance he, ere day be set,
Shall learn how deeply he was then in debt.

IV.

" But certain letters, sent from me, 'tis said,
He brings and reads—A gentleman well bred!

Of feelings delicate, and taste refined!
Why, who of manners save the vilest kind
Could so wrong friendship when affronts succeed?
Show private letters, and in public read!
How oft we there in confidence indulge
Of jest or earnest, which who thus divulge,
Strip social life of half the charm it lends,
And rive all colloquies of absent friends.

" So much for manners: next admire his sense!
How canst thou prove, oh flower of eloquence,
As yon Mustella and his followers deem,
And, since their daggers round the senate gleam,
I too must own thy rhetoric not amiss,
If thou with all those cut-throats answerest this,
How wilt thou prove, should I perchance deny,
Those letters mine? What hast thou to reply?
Thou know'st the hand:—A science thou hast learned,
And practice had therein, and profit earned;
But here, unluckily, we all could ken,
Whoever wrote them used a copyer's pen.
I envy now thy rhetoric-master's fate,
Who sold thee folly at a price so great,
As I shall soon divulge his lessons cost the state;

For what shows less of rhetoric, nay, of brains,
Than raise a charge and press it with such pains,
Which if the accused by e'en a word disclaim,
The accuser founders and is dumb for shame.

" But I deny not, nay, shall use that letter,
To prove bad manners mark a mind no better.
For what one sentence canst thou there select,
But teems with duty, compliment, respect?
If then such terms thy conduct misbecame,
Thine is the crime, and thine be all the shame,
If I addressed thee as of rank and worth,
Not as a robber and the scourge of earth.
I too have letters, but to read decline,
Though that had warrant in such use of mine,
Letters, wherein my leave was asked, forsooth,
To bring from exile home a certain youth,
And oaths were pledged that nothing should be done
Save by my sanction: which of course was won.
What power had I that arrogance to rein,
Which senate, people, laws, opposed in vain?
Yet wherefore, pray, was my consent implored,
If Cæsar's acts that exile had restored?

To make the favour mine? Where law gave right,
The favour could not e'en be thine to plight.

V.

" But having some things for myself this day
And much against Mark Anthony to say,
I, conscript fathers, must your patience ask,
Till my defence has closed the former task,
And in the latter, when at him I come,
The theme itself shall hold attention dumb.
Nor, if my modesty of life and speech
Till now be known, now think me, I beseech,
Unmindful of myself, in rolling back
The style and temper of his own attack.
He treats not me as consular, I trow:
Nor will I more treat him as Consul. No.
Consul he is not, by his life so stained,
His power so wielded, and his power so gained.
Each of these reasons three his rank refutes:
While mine derives from title none disputes.

" To show us then what maxims guide his sway,
My consulship is carped and cursed to-day.

Though mine was only mine as name enures;
In substance, conscript fathers, mine was yours.
What measure did I move, what project plan,
But you advised and praised? Ingenious man,
Persuade the senate, wilt thou, to condemn
Deeds counselled, sanctioned, and achieved by them?
And which save thou and Clodius none arraign—
Clodius, whose fate pursues thy head amain,
And will o'ertake it, e'en as Curio's was o'erta'en;
For the same mischief, that cut short their life,
Teems in thy house, their widow, and thy wife.
Antonius then can not, 'tis understood,
Approve my consulship? Servilius could:
The two Luculli, Lepidus, my friend
Hortensius, Piso, Glabrio, could commend:
Crassus, and Catulus, whose judgment moved
The Roman world, and Cato, he approved—
Ah blest! who spared his eyes a worse disaster
Than Rome in chains, Mark Anthony her master.
And more, victorious from Euphrates' side
Pompey the Great embraced me, thanked, and cried—
In vain the triumph, which his arms might earn,
But I gave where to triumph and return.

Yet why name each? through all the senate's quire,
Not one was found, but thanked me as his sire:
None, but for fortune rescued, country free,
And family redeemed, gave thanks to me.

VI.

" But, since those princes have by death been reft,
Of who survive, two consulars are left.
Cotta, who first for power and prudence ranks,
Moved prayers in public to the Gods, and thanks,
For those same measures thou hast dared defame,
And the whole senate passed it with acclaim;
An honour, which, since Rome began to be,
Was never given the gown, till worn by me.
Thine uncle Lucius Cæsar, (when was seen
Such dignity of language, mind, and mien?)
Condemned thy stepfather to forfeit life,
Though his own sister was the traitor's wife.
Of these examples, could thy graceless heart
Prefer thy stepsire's to thine uncle's part?
Whose counsels I, a stranger, then obeyed,
Hast thou, his nephew, e'er invoked for aid?

Preferring whom? forsooth, whose days of birth
Must now be heard of—Gods of heaven and earth!

"Mark Anthony will not come down to-day:—
Why? 'Tis a birthday. Whose? I scorn to say:
Suppose some Phormio, Gnatho, Ballio, whose you may.
Out upon lust, too shamelessly impure
For tongue to utter, or the ear endure!
With kin so near to counsel thy decrees,
Dost thou refer Rome's commonwealth to these?
These, who to nothing as their own pretend,
Who drain their master, these must drunk suspend
The senate's meeting, sober seek to end.
Certes, thy consulship has Rome redeemed,
And mine her blushes and her tears beseemed.

VII.

"What! Has all sense of shame with honour fled?
That in this temple thou canst lift thy head,
Where I convened the senate earth obeyed,
And thou hast bravos brought in arms arrayed,
And durst, (what is it can thy daring stay?)
Durst here confront us face to face, and say,

I Consul harassed Rome with false alarms,
And swarmed the capitol with slaves in arms!
To carry those nefarious acts, of course,
By me the senate was o'erawed with force.
Did ignorance, wretch! or impudence of face,
Suggest that slander? wretch! in either case.
What Roman, noble, knight, or citizen,
Except thyself, but thronged this mountain then?
Offering more names in Rome's defence to rise,
Than scribes could write, or registers comprise.
For when a gang, by every guilt allied,
Owned they conspired their country's parricide;
Owned plots, the conscious had before avowed,
And letters witnessed as with voice aloud,
To sack the city, wreck this empire's weal,
And ravage Italy with fire and steel;
What loyal man but instant armed and rose,
To snatch his country from her worst of foes?
Rome having then a chief, whom had she here,
The fate they suffered should be thine to fear.
But I denied them funeral, he complains;
I grudged the grave his stepfather's remains:—
Why, this outdares all Clodius ever durst!
Whom, for he was of all my foes the worst,

I loathed so justly, that I half repine
To see his vices all surpassed by thine.
Why thus remind us, and recall the proof,
That thy sole school was Lentulus's roof?
Didst fear this conduct might a doubt impart,
Whether mere nature could so file thy heart,
Without such ample aid of discipline and art?

VIII.

" But oh! what art could dictate thy discourse!
'Tis against thee its weapons turn their force.
Not only facts and dates are in confusion,
And consequences drawn with no conclusion,
But parts so justle and so ill agree,
Thou'rt more at variance with thyself than me.
For what! thy stepsire's treason is avowed;
And 'tis his sentence makes thy clamour loud:
Thus all is sanctioned which was mine to speed,
And all thou censurest was the senate's deed.
'Twas theirs to try each traitor and condemn,
Mine but to seize and bring with proof to them.
Such rhetoric claims applauses none can grudge,
It clears the culprit and convicts the judge,

Covers with praises him it would traduce,
And, where it should conciliate, heaps abuse.

" And what audacity—nay, that's his pride—
What dulness—charge the dunce could ne'er abide,
Of arms without the fane, our ears to din,
When here swords hurtle on our seats within!
Immortal Gods! when in the selfsame dome,
I Consul counsels heard that rescued Rome,
Are daggers held by ruffians hired to use.
Accuse the senate, if thou wilt; accuse
The equestrian order, that sustained us then;
Accuse all ranks, all citizens, all men:
But own the senate sits besieged to-day
By files of barbarous troops, that take thy pay.
Away with flattery! 'twas not impudence,
'Twas arrant dulness, want of common sense,
That brought him armed against our rights and laws,
To accuse our arming in our country's cause.

" Once too his face seemed fashioned to express,
He aimed at wit—Good Gods, with what success!
Though such a failure seems almost a crime
In one, who married from the stage a mime.

'Yield arms to gowns'—And did they not so yield,
Till thine came hither, and gowns fled the field?
And which was best, that treason's arms should quail,
As then, and Rome and liberty prevail,
Or Rome, as now, her liberty resign,
And senates tremble to those arms of thine?
But for my studies, and thy keen critique
On verse, this much is all I have to speak:
Of that and every art the muses teach,
All knew thine ignorance ere they heard thy speech;
While I, from youth, found wanting to no task,
My country offered or my friends could ask,
At intervals from senate, bar, and camp,
Have yet done something, by my midnight lamp,
In letters, to illume the Roman young,
And haply grace the Roman name and tongue.
But, for this theme suits neither place nor time,
Proceed, and grapple with a graver crime.

IX.

"Clodius, thou saidst, was slain at my suggestion:—
Perhaps suspicion might have raised that question,

Hadst thou been more or Clodius less fleet,
The day thy dagger drove him through the street,
With threats, and thrusts, and had achieved the work,
But stairs, o'er which he vaulted, balked thy dirk;
For then my heartiest wish was thy success:
But my advice thou never durst profess.
Now Milo's act no wish of mine affected;
'Twas done when none could wish, for none suspected.
But I advised:—What! Milo need persuasion
To serve his country where he found occasion!
But I was pleased:—When every one was glad,
Why of mankind should I alone be sad?
An inquest followed, one our courts refused,
One prudence still condemns; was I accused?
What! then, a crime that inquest never heard,
Thou first, years afterwards, hast now preferred!
But for the charge, next argued to fatigue,
That I lured Pompey's heart from Cæsar's league,
And thence the civil wars all sprung from my intrigue:—
Here, the man blunders less in facts he states,
Than, what is here all paramount, his dates.

X.

" Time was, 'twas when, of Consuls twain at odds,
Cæsar gan wrest from Bibulus the rods,
No means of mine, no efforts, were untried,
To sever Pompey's power from Cæsar's side:
But Cæsar's fortune baffled the design,
And snared and severed Pompey's heart from mine;
And grappled to his own, by Julia's match.
Ties, which, once knotted, how should I detach?
The breach thenceforth became a different task;
To hope it folly, impudence to ask.
Yet Cæsar's fortune gave occasion twice,
And I, on each, warned Pompey by advice:
(Tell, thou, if able, which I should recall!)
First, to deny five further years in Gaul;
Next, let none absent claim the Consul's chair;
(Were either followed, thou hadst ne'er been there.)
But after Pompey cast himself, and cast
His country down, for steps which Cæsar past,
And found too late what I had long presaged;
When desperate wars were ready to be waged
On Rome and freedom, never did I cease
To plead for concord, compromise, and peace.

Oh Pompey!—witness all, I oft exclaimed—
Would that the compact, you and Cæsar framed,
Were never bound, or never broke if banded;
Thine honour that, thy prudence this, demanded!
Such, Anthony, the counsels I preferred
To Rome and Pompey. Oh, had such been heard!
His rights and hers had ne'er in ruin set,
Nor thine emerged from infamy and debt.

XI.

" But these are bygones. Next, for recent guilt.
'Twas by my counsel, Cæsar's blood was spilt:—
Here, conscript fathers, doubt I fear is due,
Lest this sham slanderer has his bribe and cue,
To cover me with praise, nor mine alone,
But praise, which others claim as all their own.
For what my title to partake their fame?
Amid the conscious, who has heard my name?
Whose name, that shared the secret, was concealed?
Nay, whose not instantly, with pride, revealed?
In such exploits, men challenge more than dared;
None e'er disowns the consciousness he shared.

And what could mask me only of the throng?
So numerous, part obscure, and partly young,
All scorning secret—what so long could mask?
Or if their chiefs authority might ask
At once their country and themselves to free,
Great Gods! had either Brutus need of me?
The bust of Lucius Junius every sun
Was seen by both, Ahala's too, by one.
Whom for such counsel could a Brutus call,
Save the great statues of his father's hall?
And Cassius, he of ancestry so proud,
As brooked no leader, and no lord allowed,
Counsel from me could Caius Cassius need?
Who e'en without such colleagues planned the deed,
And had at Cydnus done it, years before,
But winds drove Cæsar from the destined shore.
Could not the loss of honours and estate,
Thy father's slaughter, and thine uncle's fate,
Domitius, rouse the Roman's blood in thee,
To strike for freedom, till incensed by me?
Could I persuade Trebonius? last of men
Whom I, if asked, had dared solicit then;
But whom henceforward heartier thanks attend,
For loving freedom better than his friend,
And prostrating a throne whose steps he might ascend.

By me was Tillius Cimber's hand directed?
Whose act I more admired than e'en suspected,
Admired, for that no favours made him pause,
When Rome required him for a holier cause.
The two Servilii, (Casca's is their name?
Ahala's call them! as their deeds proclaim,)
Caught they from me the patriot fire by stealth,
And not from freedom and Rome's commonwealth?
'Twere long to name the rest: their number great
Is glorious for themselves, and splendid for the state.

XII.

" But how this reasoner proved the charge he prest!
Oh mark I pray the logic of his test!
Forth from the ring round Cæsar Brutus came,
And called aloud on Cicero by name,
Held up the blade from Cæsar's bosom stained,
And wished me joy for liberty regained.
Why me? As conscious? Nay, a nobler cause!
That emulous with me for Rome's applause,
He called my name to witness, and resign
The patriot's palm to, deeds that rivalled mine.

Yet where art thou, who sapiently hast said—
The guilt was equal to wish Cæsar dead;
Nor canst perceive, that rule involves in guilt
All, who rejoiced when Cæsar's blood was spilt?
To wish before, or after to be glad,
Approve, or counsel, each is just as bad.
Now who, but those who cherished Cæsar's chain,
Wished him to live, or disapproved when slain?
All therefore share this guilt; for all the good
Destroyed the despot, to the best they could:
Some wanted counsel, some the nerve, to kill,
The means, the occasion, others, none the will.
But mark, I pray, the stupor of the man,
The beast I should say: thus his sentence ran.
Forth from the ring round Cæsar Brutus came,
Whom still with honour and respect I name,
Held up his dagger reeking from the blow,
And hailed, and shouted, Tullius Cicero!
Which of my knowledge seems a clear admission.
Thus, I, by thee suspect of some suspicion,
Am termed assassin, he, whose hand erected
The reeking blade, is honoured and respected!
Well, pass we this for blundering but in word;
In substance stands thy reasoning less absurd?

Whate'er thy judgment, be it now exprest,
Of Brutus, Cassius, Casca, and the rest,
What wilt thou have the cause? Antonius, wake!
Sleep off thy crapula! thine answer make!
Dost dream? Must actual cautery be applied;
Can nought convince thee, here thou must decide—
Were they who planned it, and achieved the plan,
Assassins, or the friends of Rome and man?

XIII.

" Come, for awhile be sober, and attend.
I, their accomplice thou hast said, their friend
As I acknowledge, here no medium find;
Either they were the avengers of mankind,
Champions for Rome and freedom, on the Ides,
Or were assassins, murderers, parricides.
Now tell me which. If parricides, why praised?
Why daily named in terms for honour phrased?
To Brutus why is leave of absence sent,
At thy request, beyond the law's extent?
From Brutus why are public games received,
With crowds and plaudits scarce to be believed?
For Brutus why are provinces combined?
For Cassius why? Why treasurers assigned?

Legates increased? Why all this done by thee?
Thus homicides, it seems, they ne'er can be,
But are, it follows, by thy deeds defined,
Champions of Rome, and friends of human kind.

"What! art confused? My speech was slow and plain,
But haply reasoning has perplexed thy brain:
Then brief be my conclusions thus revolved.
Because thy conscience had the guilt absolved,
Thou gav'st those honours to reward the act.
Now would I fain my negative retract,
And write to pray, if any question this,
Which thou hast charged me with, to answer—yes.
Reproach to them, or shame to me, might come,
Methinks, if either it be thought by some,
They could conceal my part in that design,
Or I, invited, could a part decline.
For when in Rome was e'er achievement done,
Or, sacred Jove! where else beneath the sun,
So great, so glorious, which shall more engage
The thought and praise of every future age?
Am I included, I, in that employ,
As with the chosen in the horse of Troy?

And thinkest I refuse to join their ranks?
No; be what may thy motive, take my thanks!
Welcome for this the odium thou wouldst cause,
To me, oh welcome as the world's applause!
For here who happier, than those patriots bold,
By thee hence banished, as thy boast is told?
Where is the desert, where the barbarous strand,
That would not hail and welcome them to land?
What man so savage, but his fate would bless
That spared him life to see them and caress?
What age so servile, literature so base,
So false to glory and the human race,
As not to consecrate with praise, with prayers,
The immortal names? Yes, number mine with theirs!

XIV.

"Yet one objection here may haply spring:
Had I, as thou hast argued, planned the thing,
Trust me, the kingdom too had perished with the king.
Were mine the style, whose traces thou hast tracked,
Ne'er had the drama its conclusion lacked:
No, by the Gods! I would have added one more act.

Albeit, if wishing Cæsar's death alone
Were guilt, that guilt, Antonius, was thine own.
Thou and Trebonius plotted it in Gaul.
Else hadst thou ne'er survived thy master's fall;
Nor else Trebonius becked thee forth to flee.
Yet mark, how friendly here I deal with thee.
That once thy spirit could conceive the plot,
I give my praise; that thou betrayed'st it not,
My thanks; that thou achieved'st not the plan,
I pardon give; the work required a man.

" Yet, if accused, couldst thou acquittal win,
Tried by the test—whom profited the sin?
Though all Rome gained, we heard thee once observe,
By Cæsar's slaughter, that they ceased to serve.
Still all in Rome had less than thou to gain,
Who, having ceased to serve, began'st to reign.
Who, late insolvent, now hast gold to pay
The countless claims of wastefulness and play;
Hast Cæsar's treasure from his house conveyed,
Hast opened in thine own a forge, and trade,
Of commentaries, ledgers, laws, and sold
Lands, taxes, tributes, towns, and spent the gold.

What could have solved thy debts, thy waste supplied,
Retrieved thy ruin, had not Cæsar died?
Methinks, some shudder in thy mien appears:
What, the cap fits too closely? Calm thy fears!
No soul suspects 'twas ever thine to serve
Thy country's cause. Thou wantest heart and nerve.
To worthier sons the commonwealth looked round,
For that great deed; and worthier sons were found.
I never said thou didst it: only done,
I say, it gave a happier heart to none.
Thus far each graver charge has answer fair:
Some less remain, which claim it, and shall share.

XV.

"Great Pompey's camp, and all those by-gone times,
Are here raked up, and reckoned with my crimes.
Where, as I said, had my advice prevailed,
What chiefs, what armies, Rome had ne'er bewailed!
What slavery ne'er debased her glorious name!
Nor thine escaped what penury and shame!
'Tis true, foreseeing there, what after past,
My heart was heavy, and my brow o'ercast.

I grieved, as all good citizens had grieved,
Had they foreseen it, or foretold believed,
Grieved when I saw that commonwealth coerced,
Which, conscript fathers, we had rescued erst,
O'er ruin's brink, and ready to be hurled.
For think me not so ignorant of the world
That love of life depressed me, whose decease
At once secured my liberty and peace.
I sighed to save those nobles good and great,
Lights of the age, and columns of the state;
Those senators, of whom such numbers there
Had graced the prætor's bench or consul's chair;
The flower of Roman youth high born and brave;
Our loyal armies; those I sighed to save.
And save by peace, of terms howe'er adverse;
For still, I argued, civil war was worse.
Had this convinced whom falser hope allured,
Nor they opposed it whom it most secured,
Thou certes, thou hadst never held that place,
Nor shown in senate, nor in Rome, thy face.

" But then I jested with the camp I ranged;
I outraged Pompey, and his love estranged:—

Whom loved he more? with whom did he discuss
More measures, or more converse share, than us?
No trivial test; for private friendship flies,
When public interests supersede its ties.
But we knew perfectly each other's aim:
Mine first was Rome's existence, next her fame:
Rome's present fame was what he first procured:
But aims thus known made differences endured.
What sentiments of me were shared and shown,
By that great man, whose virtue heaven might own,
Tell they, who followed in his train, the while
He fled Pharsalia to the Cyprian isle.
My name was mentioned oft, and always blest,
As still with sighs the fugitive confest,
He had foreboded, I foreseen, the best.
And durst thou, dull to intellect and shame,
Come and traduce me here in Pompey's name?
Me, whom his friend and mourner all allow,
Thou, both his foe before, and spoiler now!

XVI.

" Truce to that war and all its adverse fates,
That raised thy power unfairly o'er the state's!

And be the jests, thou namest, false or true,
In Pompey's camp, no answer is their due.
That camp was filled with care, but care will jest,
And all men's minds recoil when most deprest:
And where both jests and sorrows are assailed,
The charge shows neither in excess prevailed.

" One crime remains, 'twould glad me to fulfil;
My name, it seems, is found in no man's will:—
Would this were true! How many dear and dead
Had loved me still! What put it in thy head?
Alas! to me such legacies have come,
Ten thousand thousand names but half the sum.
Yet here thy happier fate must be confest.
Me none but friends have given a bequest,
Which brought more sorrow to my heart than pleasure:
To thee mere strangers have left all their treasure!
Rubrius to thee his whole estate devised!
How the man loved thee, how he must have prized,
When ignorant whether thou wert black or white,
He passed his brother's son, a Roman knight,
Long loved, long owned his heir, till now suppressed,
For one he ne'er had seen, or ne'er addressed.

Be pleased to tell us, if there's no objection,
Who was Turselius? what was his complexion?
His stature? which his tribe? or where his birth?
Ask me, thou answerest, what the man was worth!
But for aught else, interrogate some other;
He had, and left a beggar, ask, his brother!
From many a will beside the next of kin
Has been thrust out, and Anthony thrust in;
Yet of all marvels this his measure fills—
What, durst thou hint at testaments and wills?
When midst successions thou hast claimed as son,
Thy father's, thine own father's, was not one!

XVII.

"Such are his charges: such is my defence.
And now, oh flower of wit and eloquence,
For this hast thou been closeted a week,
In Scipio's villa, practising to speak?
(Though thou declaimest not, thy followers think,
To edge thy reason, but digest thy drink,)

And borrowing humour from a nicer source,
Than theirs, who ape thy grandfather's discourse,
Hast hired a sophist, exquisite device!
To abuse thee, if he could—And what the price?
The work was arduous, and the wage was dear.
Two thousand acres.—Conscript fathers, hear,
And learn what wounds exhaust your country's veins!
Two thousand acres of Leontine plains
Were given the Clodius, in whose rhetoric-school
This adept learned to babble like a fool!
Say, was that grant, most impudent of men,
In Cæsar's books, that too from Cæsar's pen?
But be some future place for mention left,
Of how those lands and others have been reft,
And what base creatures have received the theft.
For here, since all his charges are repast,
And each now answered, 'tis my turn, at last,
To make some comment on our censor's life.
Yet must I much reserve for future strife;
For novelty is due, where vices are so rife.
Dost wish us then to trace thy life's career
From boyhood? Well, begin from boyhood, here!

XVIII.

" Hast thou forgot, or thinkest Rome forgets,
The insolvent boy who compromised his debts?
The father's fault, thou answerest:—Bravely done!
A plea so pious well becomes the son.
But when the Roscian law, for public shows,
Gives all, who fail, though faultless, baser rows,
And thou durst seat thyself in knighthood's place,
Was that the father's fault, or son's disgrace?
Thy manly gown, next taken, soon became
A woman's cloak, for deeds without a name.
At first, a vulgar drab, and far less nice
Who came to purchase, than how much the price;
Till Curio found thee, and reformed thy life,
And gave the stole and station of a wife.
No menial, bought for services abhorred,
Was more the slave, the villain, of his lord.
How oft the father watched his doors about,
To ward thee off, how often kicked thee out?
Whilst thou, with night allied, of day disdained,
By lust invited, and by hire constrained,
Hast climbed the roof at dark, and entered there,
For deeds, the walls at length refused to bear.

Dost deem I charge thee with a dubious crime?
Wouldst palter for the proof? Recall the time,
When sick of grief his bed old Curio kept,
While at my feet the son fell down and wept,
For me to save thee, should his father sue
For all he pledged to guarantee thy due;
And, mad with passion, threatened else to flee
From home and country, ere abandon thee.
Stung with the woes so high a house endured,
I strove to sooth, I soothed them, and I cured.
I urged the sire to pay, and save a son,
So good, so honoured, till by thee undone:
Then to assert a parent's power and right,
And lock him from thy intercourse and sight.
Surely, e'en thou, with such transactions known,
Such scenes within my memory and thine own,
Hadst scarce found courage for this foul attack,
But for yon file of daggers at thy back.

XIX.

" But there are crimes it seems a crime to tell.
I leave this subject to thyself and hell.

'Tis thy protection to have dared a shame,
Which decent speech forbids a foe to name.
Yet be his life's career thereafter traced!
Brief shall I scan it, for my soul would haste
To deeds in Rome's extremest misery done,
And deeds thenceforth affronting every sun.
And though 'twas yours to see the deeds I mention,
Still, conscript fathers, lend not less attention!
For deeds like these should rouse a Roman's spleen,
Scarce less when mentioned, than they did when seen.
Then to the midst, and be the earlier past!
Lest time should fail us for the worst and last.

" When Clodius wrought to banish me and rob,
The tool, that tribune used to goad the mob,
His torch to fire them, was yon selfsame sot,
Who taxes me with benefits forgot:
In whose own house the twain a mischief planned—
No matter what, he well must understand.
To Egypt thence he went, in vain forbid
By all Rome's laws could do, and senate did,
And served Gabinius, chief so sage and strong,
None, who obeyed and served him, could go wrong.

And how and whither came he back? To Rome?
To the world's end in Gaul ere homeward. Home!
Homes were not then by spoil and slaughter won;
Each had his own, and Anthony had none.
Home? He had nothing he could call his own,
To set his foot in, nothing, land or stone,
Save some small fraction of Misenum's rock,
With joint adventurers held, a desperate stock!

XX.

"From Gaul he came to seek the treasurer's place.
Canst say thou soughtest then thy father's face,
Ere I was found, and prayed for Cæsar's sake,
To hear the excuses thou hadst come to make?
Which Cæsar's letters had before preferred,
And I prevented, and received unheard.
'Twas then by thee my followers were led;
And I thy canvass for the treasury sped.
'Twas also then thy sword at Clodius aimed,
While glad through all the forum Rome acclaimed;
A blow, no impulse but thine own had edged,
And this its reason then by thee alleged,

You twain had done me wrongs so great and rife,
As nought could expiate till thou hadst his life.
Whence I more marvel at the charge now prest,
That Milo did the deed at my request;
The very deed, thou hadst thyself designed,
Hadst offered me to do, but I declined:
I wished no blood imputed to my cause,
And what thou sheddest, shed for Rome's applause.

" Elected treasurer, forth he sped his road,
No leave of senate, law, or lot bestowed,
And flew to Cæsar's camp, sole refuge then
Of all insolvent, worthless, desperate men.
Where, when thy theft, and Cæsar's donative,
Had filled thy purse, as water fills a sieve,
And all was emptied which had thus been earned,
Again in want, thy footsteps home returned,
To win the tribuneship, and wield it won,
As thy stepfather Lentulus had done.

XXI.

" Here, conscript fathers, leave those private crimes,
And household stains, to whom their filth begrimes;

And turn to mischiefs dared against us all,
Our fortunes, lives, and liberties, to thrall:
For all our evils, all our wrongs, began
With this nefarious, treacherous, impious man.
For, when this order braved the brink of fate,
And tribunes' power, to save the sinking state,
Aye and save Cæsar but the man was mad,
'Twas Anthony opposed, 'twas Anthony forbade.
Opposed each act, each effort you employed,
His venal veto made each edict void,
And braved, for Cæsar's gold, at Cæsar's beck,
That axe, which never smote a worthier neck.
For which this senate, ere by death retrenched,
Ere war and exile many a light had quenched,
Passed against thee, Mark Anthony, that act,
Long used when Rome by rebels was attacked,
And traitors in the gown to punishment were tracked.
And hast thou called Rome's senators this morning,
Me to arraign, and make, forsooth, a warning,
Thou, whom they sentenced to a traitor's fate,
Me, whom they thanked for having saved the state?

" Though none could whisper this and wear a head,
For years since past, its memory had not fled.

While truth and reason guide the human race,
While Rome above all nations holds her place,
As hold she shall unless by thee reversed,
Thine intercession shall be named and cursed.
Say, what ambition marked the senate's plan,
What folly was there found, when thou, young man,
The illustrious order durst alone withstand,
To annul each effort for thy fatherland?
Durst still repeat thy veto, still repeat;
Nor wouldst hear those that order sent to treat;
To treat for what? Our country, and our home;
That thou mightst spare some residue of Rome.
But thee, no senate could by terms entice,
No prince by prayer, no sage by kind advice,
Nothing could move, that veto to withhold,
Which Cæsar's need had bought, and thine had sold:
Then was that act, that last resource employed,
Which fell on few before, and them destroyed,
For consuls, prætors, all in power alike,
To arm against Mark Anthony, and strike:
Nor were that edict then employed in vain,
Had Cæsar's camp at greater distance lain;
Which thou hadst speed to seek, and luck, alas! to gain.

XXII.

" Thou, I say, thou, Antonius, wast the cause,
Why rebels ceased at Rubicon to pause,
And turned their arms against Rome's liberty and laws.
For what said Cæsar else? What cause beside
For war alleged the infuriate parricide?
But that Rome's senate had the veto scorned,
O'erthrown a tribune, and his fate suborned.
How false this reason, and if true how weak
For arms so impious, I forbear to speak:
Against our country force is never just;
But I dispute not now with Cæsar's dust:
Thou only must acknowledge thine that force;
Thy crimes, Antonius, were its seed and source.

" Unhappy man, if thou canst comprehend,
If not, unhappier! how these things are penned,
What portrait to present on history's page,
And spread through every clime, to every age.
The Roman consuls from Italia hurled;
Pompey, the light, the lustre, of the world;
All consulars, or all whom health allowed
To follow out that flight, that funeral crowd;

With almost all who seats in senate held;
Prætors, prætorians, tribunes, youth and eld—
In brief, the Roman commonwealth expelled,
Turned out from home and country, leaving all
To lawless arms and barbarous hordes from Gaul.
Of which, if sowing thistles generate weeds,
Thy crimes, Antonius, were the source and seeds.
Mourn we three armies slain? Antonius slew!
Rome's nobles thinned? Antonius made them few!
The senate's rights o'erthrown? 'Twas Anthony o'erthrew!
For every evil sight we since have met,
(And what seems wanting?) there we owe the debt,
To him, the sword, plague, poison to destroy
The peace of Rome, as Helen was to Troy.
He all that senates erst had done undid,
And all achieved that senates had forbid,
Throughout his office, ending as beginning:
Yet mark his crime in crimes, his sin in sinning.

XXIII.

"He brought some exiles back: if kindly done,
How happened it his uncle was not one?

Was that severity? why not severe
To those no tie of nature rendered dear?
Or why for pardon was Licinius picked,
Thy fellow dicer, and for dice convict?
As if to game with convicts were the sin!
No; but his pardon was worth more to win.
Hadst reason else for power so far abused?
Forsooth, the man was absent when accused;
Mistried; condemned unheard; a mob's alarms
O'erawed the judges, or a troop with arms;
Or finally, to which the world ascribed
Thine uncle's sentence, jurymen were bribed?
No, no such reason. But the man had grace,
Had worth, had service? Nothing to the case!
Yet count the trial nought, were such the cause;
I too would pardon, and o'erlook the laws.
A knave! a knave debauched in every vice,
Condemned for play, for play with loaded dice,
Shameless enough to spread his gambling board
In Rome's mid forum! Such a knave restored
But proves his pardoner's principles the same:
Whoe'er so quits the culprit shares the shame.
In that same year, when Cæsar, sped to Spain,
Left this man Rome to riot in and reign,

What were the scenes, through Italy he showed?
His progress what, in every town and road?
This, though the theme then burthened every tongue,
And I but heard what others lived among,
'Twere wrong to pass, yet vain to paint, I ween;
No words can equal what your eyes have seen:
When witnessed earth a turpitude so base?
When, what so shamed our country and our race?

XXIV.

" With lictors laurelled, in a car elate,
The Tribune of the Romans rode in state;
And, midst the rods and axes borne before,
In open litter, rode the mime, his whore;
Whom men and magistrates were called to meet,
From towns and cities, and compelled to greet,
Not by the vulgar name the stage had styled,
But by Volumnia's, ne'er till then defiled.
Next, coach on coach, went ministers of lust,
And, last, his mother, following in the dust,
Oh had the Gods denied her womb increase!
His mother, following pathic, pimp, and piece.

And this parade was marshalled up and down,
By street and road, through colony and town,
And marked, and left, o'er Italy, the trace
Of his pollution, and of her disgrace.

" Hard were the task, and pregnant with offence,
To character his deeds, that followed thence.
He joined the wars: he gorged him with the pelf,
And blood, of Romans most unlike himself;
Happy, if happiness attend success,
And blest, with every blessing guilt can bless.
But with the veterans we must shun debate;
Although their cause and thine has difference great:
They but obeyed whom Rome their master chose;
Thou mad'st him thine, on Romans to impose.
Yet, lest thou there make mischief of my words,
Pass we what cause employed the veterans' swords.

" Victorious, to Brundusium, o'er the sea
Thou cam'st, and there thou didst not murder me.
A generous favour! for thou couldst, I cede.
Though not a soldier would, hadst thou decreed.
No,—such the influence love of country wields,
Thy soldiers, reeking from Thessalia's fields,

Remembered me, and reverently behaved
To one, by whom their country once was saved.
Yet count a crime forborne a boon bestowed,
And make existence spared existence owed,
Still could I sit and hear such insults pour,
And think of favours, as I thought before?
Such insults, when thou knew'st what answer was in store,
To tingle in thine ears, and what remains, to tingle more.

XXV.

" Whom hadst thou hastened to embrace, and kiss,
Even on Brundusium's shore? The mime, thy miss.
What, is it false? Get up and say—I lie!
Must thou confess what man would most deny?
Why, had that city no respect to claim,
Could not thy veterans' faces raise a shame?
Who, of that host, but saw it with their eyes?
And knew she sped, from under other skies,
To greet thee there: and blushed to be so dull,
As follow one, who followed but his trull.

They traversed Italy, a second time,
This worthy pair, the tribune and his mime,
And marked their path with cruelty and pillage;
Free quarters for their troops, in town and village,
In Rome, a general search for plate and wine,
For public service, namely, theirs and thine.
And here, so Cæsar's friends the senate packed,
In Cæsar's absence, ignorance of their act,
This man was Master of the Knights assigned,
E'en Cæsar's lord lieutenant o'er mankind.
And now he seemed, as Hipparch, fit to wed,
And make a legal claim to Hippia's bed,
And left her fellow mime his tribute steeds instead.
Nor challenged yet the house he after sacked,
But Piso's palace gave the home he lacked.
Why should I tell you of his bribed decrees,
Successions reft from those, or sold to these?
Want was his plea: such ways and means were bad;
But what else served? and money must be had.
Turselius lived, to learn his merits, still;
Nor yet had loving Rubrius left a will,
Nor Pompey's heirs been sudden dispossest,
And many else, by title arms attest.

He needs must live as robbers can alone,
Who call whatever they can clutch their own.

" But turn, from sturdier guilt, to lighter grace,
And mark how well his manners matched his place.
Thou, with those jaws, that bosom's breadth and length,
That bulk and build of gladiatorial strength,
At Hippia's wedding, gorged thyself with wine,
To such excess, o'erswilling as a swine,
Thou wast obliged, the morning following from it,
In public, midst assembled Rome, to vomit.
Oh beastly business, seen, and even heard!
Had it at supper, in those cups occurred,
That inundate the thirst they cannot quench,
All had cried shame. But, on the judgment bench,
At public business, in the official robe,
Before all Rome, vicegerent of the globe,
Who should have been ashamed of spitting, spewed!
And belching forth a flood of victuals crude,
With vomit fetid of the wine he swilled,
His breast, and all the tribune, fouled and filled.
But this he owns a sordid scene. Proceed!
We next encounter with a splendid deed.

XXVI.

" Sated with blood, but still for spoil athirst,
Cæsar, from Egypt and the east coerced,
Came home, with laurel wreaths his brow to twine,
In his opinion, happy—not, in mine.
No, mine metes fortune by a worthier test,
That none, who wrongs his country, can be blest.
Before the fane of Jove he pitched his spear,
And sold—Immortal Gods! my eyes are sear,
But round my heart still sorrow keeps its hold—
With spear and hammer they proclaimed and sold
Great Pompey's lands and goods! Then, then alone,
Did Rome forget her chains, and dare to groan.
Slaves as we were, fear knocking every knee,
Our thoughts were Roman still, our groans were free.
And all expecting—who would dare to buy,
What desperate outcast, damned of earth and sky—
None, none, save yon Mark Anthony, was found.
Though many an abject gaped that spear around,
Men, who in baseness dared the utmost stretch,
But all, all shrunk from this, save yonder wretch.

Did folly blind, or fury fire, thy heart?
First, to go haunt the sequestrator's mart,
Thou, born of place and pedigree so high;
Then, bid for Pompey's fortune, bid and buy,
Careless or ignorant thou wert buying then
The curse of Rome, the wrath of Gods and men,
Their hiss, and horror, ne'er to pass away.
And with what insolence he seized his prey!
Seized that man's wealth, whose fortitude and worth
Made Rome the terror, and the charm, of earth!

XXVII.

" In that man's fortune, flush he leaped, to merge,
As divers plunge exulting in the surge.
And, as a mummer shifts his garb in haste,
Sudden a beggar rose with wealth to waste.
But 'tis a saw—' Ill gotten and ill spent.'
It passed all faith, it seemed like some portent,
How much he squandered, by what means and ways,
In how few months, I say not months, but days.
The stores of wine were great, of plate immense;
Garments, and garnish, wrought at vast expense;

Though far from luxury, still with splendour wrought:
Of all, in some few days, there rested nought.

" What gulph could gorge it, what Charybdis sink?
Nay, for that monster was but one to drink,
The sea, by Heaven! the sea could scarce absorb
Such wealth, so vast, so scattered through the orb.
No ward was there of signet, key, or pen;
Whole stores were lavished on the worst of men:
Here the mime plundered, there the mummer pilled;
The house with gamblers swarmed, with drunkards filled;
Each hour, each place, had tables for the feast,
And, worse, for dice, (luck fails him there at least);
E'en cells of slaves with crimson cloth were stoled,
And menials couched on Pompey's palls of gold.
Then cease to wonder how the thing was done!
Still wealth is wasted worse, the worse 'tis won;
No means, though never man's so much embraced,
Nor towns, nor realms, could sate the squanderer's waste.

" But e'en the parks, the palace, Pompey owed!
What, thou! thou durst e'en enter that abode?
Thou cross the sacred threshold of the door?
Thou show that face great Pompey's Gods before?

A house, no Roman passed but turned to weep,
None could scarce gaze at, couldst thou dare to keep?
Dare keep so long? where, sottish as thou art,
Was nothing found, could gratify thy heart.

XXVIII.

" What! did those columns, hung with many a sign
Of triumph, make thee think the portal thine?
Those prows, from galleys of the foes to Rome,
Seen in the porch, couldst deem thyself at home?
No! lost to soul and sense and all but pelf,
Thou knewest still thine own, thou knewest still thyself.
There, every sleep thy conscience must have racked,
There, every vigil stung, till half distract.
Midst all the treasure found, and wassail made,
All drunk, all furious, as thou art,—a shade,
That awful form, that living made thee shrink,
Must oft have crossed thee, in thy dreams, and drink;
Made thee at midnight start from sweltry rest,
And rave at morning, as of hell possest.
Oh, I could weep the very walls and roof!
Which ne'er had witnessed aught to tempt reproof;

Nor word, nor deed, that slander dared impeach,
But types of every virtue Heaven could teach—
For, conscript fathers, you remember yet
What Pompey was? no Roman can forget—
How incorrupt, how dread, in public life;
How pure, in private, towards his friends and wife;
Great, in the senate, and the camps, of Rome,
And good, and kind, and amiable, at home.
And this man's house became the haunt of vice,
The stew, the sty, of lechery, drink, and dice!

" But then, thou answerest, did I not retrench?
Reclaim my household from that thriftless wench,
Restore her dower, divorce her, and dismiss?—
Thou didst! Oh virtue, what a sage is this,
Who boasts no worthier act, in all his life,
Than parting with the mime he made his wife!
Yet here, what quaint conceits his pride beguile!
How frequent he usurps the affected style—
' I Consul and Antonius'—Meaning what?
Consul and scoundrel? Consul and a sot?
What else is Anthony? Were rank in names,
To use his thus, thy grandfather had claims;

Thy banished uncle thus might claim to speak;
Unless Antonius mean thyself unique.
But pass all crimes, except of treason's source.
Rome's wars and wrongs recal us to their course:
Her wars thy faction, and her wrongs thy work.

XXIX.

"Yet these betimes thou madest means to shirk:
Thy real motives cowardice and lust.
What other? Thou couldst ne'er pretend disgust.
Already thou hadst tasted Roman blood—
Tasted! hadst drained at Pharsaly a flood!
Hadst with those hands there battled in the van,
Hadst cloven down Domitius, worthiest man!
Hadst after battle heard no prisoner's prayer,
But sabred thousands, Cæsar wished to spare.
With all this practice, these exploits to boast,
Why didst not follow him to Lybia's coast?
Where guilt still battled, freedom struggled still,
And wealth remained to spoil, and blood to spill.
And what wast thou, when Cæsar home returned?
Thou, who hadst held so near a place, and earned:

Thou, to that general Quæstor, through his fights,
To that Dictator Master of the Knights,
In power his partner, guider of his guilt,
Cause of the war and all the blood it spilt,
Author and sharer of the plunder won,
And by his will, thou say'st, adopted son!
His first demand was—pay, for what thou boughtest,
At Pompey's sale. Thou answeredst as thou oughtest.
Think not I lessen or withhold thy due;
Thou answeredst, what almost was just and true—
Pay him! Why rather than by him be paid?
Did Cæsar conquer Rome without my aid?
Warred he without? 'Twas I gave war its cause.
I armed his hands, by those my desperate laws,
Armed him against his country and his home,
Against the senate, laws, and Gods of Rome,
Armed him to mock the curses that forbid it,
And make his brethren slaves—'Twas I that did it!
What! fought he for, or conquered by, himself?
No. They, who shared the crime, must share the pelf.

" Here thou hadst sense: but Cæsar soldiers had,
Enough to make e'en better reasoning bad.

His troops thy clamour, like thyself, despised,
And seized thine all. A sale was advertised:
A schedule shown. How all men laughed and hissed,
To read, or hear, the auctionary list!
There nothing was, of all set down for sale,
So vast, so various, nothing of the tale,
That fraction of Misenum saved alone,
Nothing, the seller could have called his own.
The auction's aspect showed a piteous scene:
Some battered plate of Pompey's; slaves unclean;
Garments of his, some few, and those distained;
Making men grieve that anything remained.
Even this too failed. The heirs of Rubrius prayed,
Cæsar gave sentence; and the sale was stayed.
Now, the man staggered, desperate where to bound;
And now, in Cæsar's house a wretch was found,
There armed in ambush with a murderer's knife,
And, Cæsar said, by thee, against his life.
But chance here changed, and gave thee time to pay,
And might have purged both debt and guilt away;
For Cæsar sped to Spain. Go with him, go!
To Spain, for honour's sake, for fortune's! No.
Thou good gladiator! but how soon exempt!

XXX.

" And shall we fear, or feel except contempt,
For one, who shirks, not Cæsar's cause I say,
Which, base howe'er, 'twas baser to betray,
But from his own, his fortune's cause, can shrink,
And shirk the faction of his meat and drink?
At length he started:—Aye, and turned. For what?
Banditti? Dolabella found them not.
Or shun the field, Mark Anthony, or fight!
Espouse no quarrel, or defend its right!
Thrice Cæsar battled, where but Romans bled,
When Afric, Greece, and Spain, were heaped with dead:
In all, thy colleague braved the brunt of Mars,
And, in the last, had wounds, and has the scars;
(Where I, if questioned, still condemn his cause,
Yet, in the worst, such courage claims applause;)
But what art thou? Fought Pompey's sons in Spain
Their country's rights, and not their own, to gain?
Their father's gods, his palace, and estate,
Were theirs to claim, and thine to sequestrate.
In such a cause, if ever wrong gave right,
Who should have met them, foremost in the fight?

Thou, who their palace spoiled, their fortune spent.
Yet Dolabella to the battle went,
Fought in thy cause, and suffered at thy post,
Whilst thou in Gaul wast spewing at thy host.

" Whence, how returned this man, who questions now
Why I came back from Greece? I'll answer how;
Why I have told: I sped, when Rome required,
And fain had served her, ere thy year expired.
For how I came, attend! I entered town
By day, the road, in sandals, and a gown;
And not in Gallic shoes, and camp attire,
Through lanes, by dark, like him who dared inquire.
Of all his fooleries, I know none so foul.
Nay, look not at me with that angry scowl!
Thou wouldst forgive me, could thy heart but see,
How much the shame, it feels not, burns in me.
He, who had been vicegerent, or so named,
Who craved the Consul's chair, or rather claimed,
Through towns and colonies of Gaul returned,
By conquering which our fathers office earned,
When Rome had power her officers to choose,
Returned, in camp attire, and Gallic shoes!

XXXI.

"At noon he halted, several miles from town,
In some low inn, and drank, till day was down:
Thence, round by lanes, and in a muffler lapped,
Drove to his palace, in a car, and rapped.
'Who's there?' 'A messenger from Marcus sent
With letters for his wife!' Let in he went,
Hied to her bower, and gave the missive brought.
Which when she read, and whimpered, as she ought,
(For all was fondly penned, with lovers' vows,
To leave the mime, and cleave unto his spouse;
The mime, he late divorced, and after kept:)
Which when the more she read, the more she wept,
It touched his heart too far to be withstood:
He tore his cloak aside, threw back his hood,
Rushed to her arms, and kissed her neck, or bit.
Blackguard! I know no epithet so fit.
Thus was all Rome that night beat up to arms,
All Italy long vexed with false alarms,
E'en that thy wife might sudden see thee drunk,
And learn, ere hoped, her preference to a punk.
Such ends at home: but baser were abroad;
To o'erbear the prætor, and the laws defraud.

Whence, when in public asked—why unawares
Thou cam'st, thou answeredst—'On mine own affairs,'
The rabble hitched the words in many a ditty,
And sung thy name, and hooted through the city.

XXXII.

"But leave we minor crimes and seek the main.
How swift thy steps when Cæsar came from Spain!
Whate'er thy caution ere the fight was done,
After, thy courage was in doubt to none.
Of all, who started sooner, posted faster,
Went further, who, to compliment their master?
Thus proved at least a strenuous man if shy,
Again he seemed a favourite—Heaven knows why.
But such was Cæsar: men athirst for gold,
And whelmed with debt, if profligate and bold,
In his employ still found the readiest places.
And, seeing thee adept in all these graces,
He named thee Consul, with himself he named.
His plighted word though Dolabella claimed:
Yet Cæsar's honour was invoked in vain.
But of that fraud, that mockery, why complain?

How Cæsar proved perfidious there, is known,
And how thou mad'st his perfidy thine own.
The new year's calends came; the senate met:
Rose Dolabella, and thine ears beset,
In terms unmeasured more than mine to-day;
And what, good Gods! was Anthony's to say?
That Cæsar, ere he went to Spain, had planned
Whom he next year for consuls should command—
(Command? Yes, such the fact in every thing,
Here such the words; yet Cæsar was no king!)
But Dolabella then was named for one,
And Cæsar gave commands it should be done;
When Anthony replied, religion's rite
Placed in his hands authority or might,
As Augur, (Augur great, forsooth, and good!)
To annul the election, and annul he would.
Oh patience! when was guiltier nonsense heard?
When words at once so impious and absurd?

"For what! the election, which, thou daredst state,
Thou Augur wouldst by auspices vacate,
Couldst thou not cancel by religion, tell,
If Consul and not Augur, just as well?

Nay, better? Augurs but proclaim results,
The Consul dictates, who himself consults.
Silly enough! But Anthony is dense,
And seldom sober; hold him not to sense.
Yet mark the assurance of his brazen brow!
He, months before, in senate dared avow,
Were Dolabella chosen, some objection,
Which auguries give, should cancel his election.
Why, when have augurs seen a future sign?
When, but from heavens inspected, dared divine?
When, but on days prefixed, the heavens inspected?
When fixed the day, that consuls are elected?
How ignorance here his impudence transcends!
What augury is, he neither comprehends,
Nor speaks as who to truth or decency pretends.
Thence, to the Ides, no lictor more submiss,
Less free no puppet, than this Consul, this.
He stretched his neck, and bowed, as Cæsar told;
And begged his favours first, and after sold.

XXXIII.

"But lo! the election comes; the lots are cast:
He sits. The tribes are ranked: in silence past.

The first is called; has voted: not a word.
The second: not a breath. They call the third:
Sudden this Augur—ah! this Lælius say,
Starts, as from sleep, and cries 'Another day!'
Oh rare, rare impudence! What sign occurred?
What seen, felt, heard, pretended to be heard?
Was heaven e'en watched for auspices that day?
Thou never yet hast said so, nor canst say.
But thus, forsooth, the ill omen was inflicted,
Which thou hadst long provided, long predicted.
Thus were Rome's rites and auspices defiled,
Priesthood abused, and consulship beguiled;
For which, the Gods from Rome avert the stroke,
And give yon culprit what his crimes provoke!
No more! lest Dolabella's acts be hurt:
Though there our college must its powers exert.
Yet mark how pride has made Antonius mad.
'Long as I would, those auspices were bad,
The election void: and when again I would,
The election stands, the auspices were good.'
What! If 'another day' no force possess,
Why thou wast drunk to say it; come, confess!
If force it have, what is it? Am I not
An Augur? Augur, tell thy colleague what!

But, lest we pass what needs omission least,
Turn, and take here the Lupercalian feast.

XXXIV.

" What! Has assurance left that brow at last?
See, conscript fathers, here he writhes aghast;
His colour flies, he thrills at my rebuke,
He sweats—Do what thou wilt, except to puke.
Durst own dishonour of so vile a kind?
Or durst deny it? Come, for I would find
Thy rhetoric-master lost not all his pains,
Nor Rome all profit of Leontine plains.
Red, on the rostra, in his golden chair,
Cæsar sat robed, with laurel round his hair:
When thou, forgetful that, though priest of Pan,
Thou still wast Consul, or at least wast man,
Thou next didst mount; approach thy colleague throned;
And show a crown. The Roman forum groaned.
A crown! From whence? Found haply on the road?
No, no: 'twas fashioned in thine own abode,
And brought by thee premeditate from home.
Thou didst uplift it, midst the groans of Rome,

To prove her patience to its utmost stretch,
Thou, first of men to king a colleague, wretch!
Didst hold o'er Cæsar's head a crown, thou didst;
Which he repulsed, the cheers of Rome amidst.
And then for pity's sake thou mad'st appeal;
And suppliant e'en at Cæsar's feet didst kneel—
For what? For bondage? For thine own in sooth.
If still thou heldst those habits of thy youth,
Ask for thyself, and not for Rome and us,
Who never gave thee charge for asking thus.
And oh! what eloquence adorned thy speech,
When, with a goat skin girt about the breech,
All bare beside, thy stature stark was seen,
Haranguing Rome, in nakedness obscene.
What filth! what turpitude! Immortal Gods,
What forfeit merits more the cross and rods!
Dost wait for prickles, and a goad, to smart?
If feeling rest, if sense in any part,
These words draw blood, they lacerate thy heart.
By Heaven! I grieve to wrong the patriots' fame,
Yet grieved I think, and say it,—'tis a shame,
While twenty daggers won the world's renown,
By justly slaughtering who refused a crown,

Not one has reached who gave the diadem.
He lives, in spite of justice, shame of them.
Lives! he inscribes Rome's calendar to say,
Marcus Antonius Consul gave this day
To Julius Cæsar, as by Rome directed,
The name and crown of king—which he rejected.
No wonder thou shouldst shun repose, or shun
The senate's sight, the city, or the sun;
And drink with thieves, whose riots never cease;
And cherish war; for where canst thou find peace?
What law can shield thee, what tribunal aid,
Thee, by whose kingdom all had been betrayed?
Ah, whence was Tarquin banished? Where, and why,
Did Manlius fall? or Spurius Cassius die?
Behold Tarpeia's rock! The forum see!
And this is Rome, where tyrants must not be!
Till Anthony forsooth should make, and bring,
A crown, from home, to hail his colleague king.

XXXV.

"Return we to the auguries. How, I pray,
Hadst thou prepared to vote, and what to say,

On that, the senate mustered to decide,
And Cæsar came to move, the day he died?
'Twas rumoured, thou hadst conned a long reply,
In case I charged thine auguries with the lie.
But Rome, that day, gave destiny a change;
And gave thine auguries a reverse as strange.
The Ides of March were come—Each theme besides
Give preference to the Ides, the glorious Ides!
How pale the craven turned! how swift he fled,
That morn, how trembled for his worthless head!
E'en suffered to get home, and there remain,
Spared by their folly, who had saved him sane,
He barred his doors, by conscious guilt unnerved,
And deemed each knock the deathman's he deserved.
Alas! forever I foresee, too well,
My country's evils, and in vain foretell!
Beware!—E'en in the Capitol I told,
And warned our champions, ere their work was cold;
When some urged me to see thee, and prepare
For peace with freedom—Nay, I cried, beware!
There is no tongue can heal, no league can close,
The breach of freedom's friends with freedom's foes.
To-day he'll pledge his honour or his oath,
For all you ask; to-morrow forfeit both:

The fear, that makes him loyal, once removed,
He'll prove the Antonius he has always proved.
And thus, while other chiefs their influence used,
And went and came between, I still refused:
Nor saw, nor deemed thee but the worst of foes,
While day twice darkened. When the third arose,
I went, unwilling, through a steely girth
Of arms, that circled round the fane of Earth.
Oh! what a day, Antonius, then was thine!
Why hast thou grudged thyself its grace divine?
Foes as we are, the contrast wrings my heart,
Of what thou mightst have been, and what thou art.

XXXVI.

"Hadst thou continued what thou seemedst then,
Who had been like thee, who so great of men?
Peace had remained. Whose boon, forsooth, was thine;
Since thou, as hostage, didst thy son consign,
The illustrious grandson of a libertine.
But fear then healed, whom courage since has baned:
The virtues, fear instils, are brief retained;
And ah, when fear had fled, audacity remained.

E'en while some thought thee loyal I afraid,
E'en then thou ledst that mutinous parade,
Misnamed a funeral; mustering Rome to hear
Her tyrant mourned and lauded on his bier.
Thine was that eulogy, with tears and sobs;
Thine were those hints for vengeance; thine the mobs.
Thou sentest brands, both those, that lit the pyre,
And those, that rapt Bellieno's house with fire;
Thou sentest too those mingled thieves and slaves,
With arms, to make our palaces our graves.
And yet, as thus to wipe away the smoke,
The following days, how fair the words he spoke!
How wise his laws! One public gifts suppressed;
One stayed immunities; and one, the best,
So keen his horror of a king became,
Razed out the Dictatorial power and name.
Peace seemed restored; the commonwealth seemed free;
Seemed settled: seemed to others, not to me;
Who feared, each day, some tempest to o'erwhelm
The wreck of Rome, Antonius at the helm.
Was my fear vain? Was his a long disguise?
Throughout this mount, before your face and eyes,
Immunities were published, given for bribes,
To individuals? aye! and towns, and tribes.

Whole provinces, whole nations, bought for gold
The Roman freedom, which her Consul sold.
Thus, conscript fathers, should you stand the cost,
Those towns, tribes, nations, provinces, are lost:
Thus is Rome's revenue destroyed, and, worse,
Her empire maimed, to fill her Consul's purse.

XXXVII.

" Where now the millions, booked in March, and stored
In Cæsar's vaults? Accursed was his hoard!
Yet might redeem us from a tribute's cost,
Could not the robbed regain the wealth they lost.
And thou, whose debts in March were millions owed,
How hast thou paid in April? tell the mode.
Why, e'en to count thy bribes, would endless be:
But there was one pre-eminent decree,
Conceived and drawn with such egregious craft,
That all, who read it, wept at once and laughed.
Cæsar, who always hated all that durst
Love Rome and freedom, hated most and worst
Bithynia's King: I doubt he hated thus
Marseilles, the Knights of Rome, or even us.

By embassies that King had urged in vain,
In person vainly urged, his rights to gain;
But Cæsar, who alive those rights denied,
Grew just and gracious towards them, when he died.
Alive he sued that monarch, while his guest,
To audit; taxed his subjects, tithed his chest;
He sent a Greek his Tetrarchy to drain;
He reft, what e'en the senate gave in vain,
He reft Armenia from that monarch's reign.
These Cæsar living took, but dead returned.
And mark what words are Cæsar's since inurned.
'Whereas 'tis just—Whereas 'tis not unjust'—
Quite Cæsar's style! but Cæsar's changed to dust.
Why, that man's phrase, each audience that recurred,
For I there pleaded for the King, and heard,
And Cæsar's phrase was this, till life was done,
Our claims had no pretence to justice, none.
But the King's agents, (honest men, I wis,
Though weak and timid for affairs like this,)
Apart from me, from all his friends apart,
Have entered that saloon, that public mart,
Where none with gold or credit need despond,
Thy wife's saloon, and signed a certain bond.

Which to what purpose canst thou turn? What course,
Consider, canst invent, to put in force?
For soon as tidings reached Bithynia's shore,
That Cæsar's power to spoil or spare was o'er,
Out marched the monarch, and his own retook,
By arms, without a leaf from Cæsar's book:
By common right; for when a tyrant bleeds
Each, whom he pillaged, to his own recedes.
Now, will a lawyer—come, will e'en the elf
Who lawyer seems to none except thyself,
Pretend a bond to purchase lands can bind,
Those lands re-entered ere the bond was signed?
Here was no sale; but ere the sale began,
The King reclaimed his province; like a man:
But we, like abjects, shrink from freedom's cause,
And, while we hate the tyrant, hold his laws.

XXXVIII.

" Why should I name those edicts without end?
Those books, and papers, Cæsar never penned?
Which now our felons forge almost as well,
And hawk, like playbills, through the street, to sell.

Whence Anthony has vaults so filled with treasure,
'Tis reckoned not by tale but weight and measure.
Yet see, how blind is avarice, only see!
Rome, four days since, saw published a decree,
By which Crete's richest towns from toll were spared,
From tithe, from taxes; and that isle declared,
'Soon as the term of office, granted late
To Brutus, ends,' a free confederate state.
Hast thou thy senses? Shouldst thou not be chained?
Crete free by law, which Cæsar had ordained,
Soon as the term to Brutus given be done,
When Cæsar perished ere that term was won!
Was won by Brutus, with the world's applause,
For ending Cæsar power to dictate laws.
But bargains bind, whate'er their blunders cost:
And thus has Crete, the province Crete, been lost.
In brief, what hast thou scrupled to supply,
Which men and money could be found to buy?
That law, of grace for exiles, who compiled?
Was that too Cæsar's? I wish none exiled:
Yet why are men, by him to exile driven
For causes most unlike, alike forgiven?
Or why leave any? Why not all restore?
But four remain; for all, except the four,

Why mete one measure, and for them another?
In fine, why treat them like thy father's brother?
Twice have thy laws relieved the exiles' lot,
And twice thine exiled uncle was forgot.
At last he came, without an act of grace;
And then thou bad'st him seek the Censor's place,
And led'st a canvass, which provoked the sneers
Of Rome, alas! and mingled them with tears.

"Well, why not hold the election, which began?
It thundered on the left:—Religious man!
What hurts his interest Heaven in vain portends;
But how devout, how pious, towards a friend's!
Even when a poor septemvirate he claimed,
Didst thou not destitute and leave him shamed?
For what? More thunder? What hadst thou to dread?
Forsooth, his pardon would have risked thy head.
He sunk, o'erwhelmed with outrages from thee,
Who, hadst thou heart to feel, or sense to see,
Shouldst have revered in his a father's life.
His child, thy cousin, once had been thy wife:
Thou didst repudiate and eject that bride,
But not before her place had been supplied.

More, thou didst slander one from error free,
Pure e'en of folly, save her love for thee,
With having had adulterers in thy bed.
'Twas not enough: yet what can more be said?
On new-year's day, when full the senate came,
Thou, in her father's presence, durst proclaim—
The cause of private hate and public strife
With Dolabella was, 'he whored my wife.'
Say, conscript fathers, there what shame was missed?
Or what, then witnessed, should have most been hissed?
The indecent choice of such a place and time;
The attempt to brand a colleague with a crime;
The impious outrage of a father's ear;
Or that base spite, so dastardly severe,
Which charged the wife, he widowed by divorce,
His father's niece, in terms so false and coarse.

XXXIX.

"To Cæsar's acts! When, when are they to cease?
The senate made them laws, for sake of peace.
But what? What Cæsar's books for his denote;
Not all Mark Anthony may say he wrote.

Then whence are these? Who found them, proved, enrolled?
If false, why sanctioned? and, if true, why sold?
But thou wast bidden, in June to hold a court,
Prove all those acts, record them, and report.
Where was that court convened? who summoned? say!
Or didst thou wait for acts till after May?
Till thou hadst visited the veterans' farms,
Enrolled recruits, and entered Rome in arms.
How proud a progress May and April filled!
Till Capua checked thee, and had almost killed.
Thou threatenest Capua? Go, fulfil thy boast;
And balk mankind no longer with *almost*.
How proud that progress! how, need I relate,
He dined as Consul, and got drunk in state!
For that he suffered; but he proved his powers
In sorer mischiefs, where the loss was ours.
Campania, where, when soldiers erst were sent,
Rome grudged the loss of revenue and rent,
Campania's plain was seized by him, and sliced,
And given the things, with whom he drank and diced.
Mimes, conscript fathers, have Campania filled!
Mimes reap the harvest, where your veterans tilled!
Why, after this, regret Leontium's plain,
Next fairest garden of the world for grain?

Three thousand acres are thy surgeon's ground!
As if his drugs had made thee sane and sound:
Two thousand are thy rhetoric-master's fee!
As though one could teach eloquence to thee.

XL.

" A colony, led out by Cæsar, grew
At Casilinum; there thou led'st a new.
I, asked by thee of Capua, had declared,
(And Capua's case with Casilinum paired,)
By sacred rites Rome's colonies are sped,
And, where one stands, a new may not be led:
New colonists, I granted, thou couldst add.
But thou, though laws of Gods and men forbade,
To Casilinum, sped with flag and plough,
Led'st a new colony, and planted'st, thou,
By Capua's spoil to gratify thy hate,
And drive the ploughshare up to Capua's gate.
From this rank theft, this sacrilege, he ran
To Varro's villa—Woe that worthiest man!
Say, with what right, what face? The same, no doubt,
By which the heirs of Rubrius were thrust out;
By which Turseliuse's estate was won,
And weak and wealthy heirs are still undone.

The spear gives right:—Oh right without a flaw!
But Cæsar's spear, not thine. Be ledgers law,
But Cæsar's, where thy desperate dues are set;
Not thine own ledgers, which crossed out the debt.
But when was sale of Varro's villa named?
Who saw the spear? Who heard the cant proclaimed?
Thou sent'st to buy of Cæsar at the Nile:—
Forsooth, his coming seemed so long a while.
Why, who e'er heard the seizure of those lands?
Which all had heard, if seized by Cæsar's hands.
Now, what if Cæsar wrote, and letters showed,
That thou shouldst render up all Varro owed?
Remove those swords a moment from thy side!
Soon shalt thou see a difference vast and wide,
'Twixt Cæsar's spear, and Anthony's pretence.
Not only Varro's heirs would thrust thee thence,
But friends, acquaintance, guests—I do not doubt
The neighbouring stones would rise and pelt thee out.

XLI.

" What days there passed of gluttony and wine!
Alas, fair house! The feast began at nine:

They eat, they drank, they vomited, they gamed.
Apt with the proverb all who saw exclaimed—
'Fair house, unlike thee is thine owner now!'
Tenant, not owner, but how different thou!
A sage lived in it, till a robber thrust:
'Twas built for literature, but turned to lust.
And there what works were Varro's, what discourse!
Of laws, arts, sciences, their use and source;
Rome's annals, rites, and monuments, he showed.
But when this spoiler made it his abode,
The house resounded songs, and drunken calls,
The floors with wine were flooded, stained the walls;
Ingenuous youths reclined among his varlets,
And mothers mingled at the board with harlots.
Three neighbouring towns sent, compliments to pay:
Unheard, unseen, who came were turned away.
And haply better for the forms of place:
They thus at least avoided one disgrace.
But when to Rome he passed Aquinum near,
And crowds came forth to meet him and to cheer,
Right on, his litter, through the town, was led,
With blinds shut up, as if it bore the dead.
More devious crowds came down Anagnia's hill,
And, sillier, hailed him, as if Consul still.

Incredible the fact, but past dispute,
He ne'er returned, nor noticed, one salute:
Though with him rode his master-butler then,
And master-bully, both Anagnian men.
His threats, at Sidicinum, why annex?
Why, how he dared Puteoli to vex?
For that they chose, with common heart and voice,
Cassius and Brutus patrons—Worthiest choice!
Not forced, as thou and Basil were elect;
Whom none would clients choose, that dared reject.

XLII.

"Meanwhile, how bright a morning chased the gloom,
That day, thy colleague razed the tyrant's tomb,
Piled in the forum, and by thee adored:
Whom the news felled, as smitten with a sword.
I nothing know, what after was arranged:
But thou re-entered'st Rome, and all was changed.
It was that arms and fear prevailed, I trust;
But down thy colleague fell, from heaven to dust:
Thou mad'st him, not, the Gods forbid, like thee,
But unlike all he was, or seemed to be.

Thou entered'st Rome, with menace in thy suite;
And flight and tumult shrieked from street to street.
We had seen Cinna here too bad and bold;
We had seen Sylla lording it of old;
Of late seen Cæsar reigning on his throne:
If these had swords, 'twas few, and never shown.
But thou, in barbarous state, art borne about,
With guards, in ranks embattled, sabres out,
And litters following, filled with shields, behind.
Use has at length benumbed the Roman mind,
But when in June the senate saw it first,
We rose with horror, and in flight dispersed.
Nor senate there, nor senators, were needed.
Glad we were gone, to business he proceeded—
What miracles of crime! For lucre's cause
Who forged dead Cæsar's books, and made them laws,
Now, to convulse the commonwealth he swayed,
Broke laws, the best that Cæsar living made.
Abroad, the term of office was extended;
At home, the man, who should have first defended
The acts of Cæsar, or have last decried,
Public or private, set them both aside.
Of public, what more duteous to fulfil
Than laws? Of private, what before a will?

His laws are cancelled, some with Rome's consent,
And some without: and Cæsar's testament,
A right Rome's humblest citizen enjoys,
Is treated like an idiot's and a boy's.
Where are his pictures, which to Rome were left?
His statues where? The pictures have been reft,
And sent to Pompey's house; the sculptured stone
To Scipio's villa: places called thine own.

XLIII.

" And thou wouldst cherish Cæsar's memory still?
Wouldst guard his honours? As thou didst his will.
What greater honours had he than a shrine,
A dome, and priest? Yes, Julius the divine,
Had Anthony, for sacrifice and prayers,
His flamen named, as Mars and Jove have theirs.
Go on. Why has thy piety so ceased?
Why named, and not inaugurated, priest?
Select thy day. No augur will decline
To consecrate a cure so fitly thine;
None, to devote thine execrable head,
Thou tyrant's priest, thou flamen of the dead!

Next tell, what day is this, we thus convene?
Was not the fourth day of the games yestreen?
Didst not enact for Cæsar, when alive,
That in his honour there should thence be five?
Why are we not in robes of purple dressed?
Why Cæsar slighted, and thy law transgressed?
What, having filed the day by rites divine,
Now is thy conscience boggling at a shrine?
Nay, either quit the faith, or keep it pure!
Conserve thy God's religion, or abjure!
Would I then sanction, what thy flattery did,
The dome, shrine, flamen? I! the Gods forbid!
But thou, who must defend, for self-defence,
The acts of Cæsar, hast thou one pretence,
Why some are sanctioned, others are o'erthrown?
Unless, perhaps, it suit thy cause to own,
It sought not honour for the god deceased,
But all thine aim was lucre for the priest.

" Well! To all this, what hast thou, to object?
Come, for defence, thy wits, thy words, collect!
I wait thine answer. I thine eloquence expect.
Thy grandsire had that gift, and well adorned;
But bolder thou each ornament hast scorned:

He clothed discourse with all its arts suggest;
But thou canst speak unstudied, and undressed.
Come, wilt thou answer? Hast thou heart to try?
Canst wag thy tongue? Canst gibber in reply?
Through this long charge, what error hast thou heard?
What point, to which thou durst respond a word?

XLIV.

"But leave the past: the present needs thy power.
Come, if thou canst, defend this day, this hour?
Why sits the senate hedged with arms? Why stand
Thy satellites to hear me, sword in hand?
Why are the doors of Concord's temple barred?
Why to the forum fetch yon Syrian guard?
Why to this mount those savage soldiers fetch,
With quivers charged? For self-defence? Thou wretch!
In thine own country, if thou canst not live,
Without that self-defence, which soldiers give,
Die! Better die a thousand deaths. Beware!
There is, believe me, no protection there.
Thy country's laws, and countrymen's affection,
Must give, or swords can never give, protection.

They will be wrested, will be snatched away,
By Rome, in vengeance—Speed, speed on, the day!
Oh may I live its blessed dawn to see!
But, do whatever thou mayst do to me,
If future counsels guide thee like the past,
Thou canst not stand; I say, thou canst not last.
A third instalment rests too long unpaid,
From her, whom, lest my epithets upbraid,
I call thy most unavaricious wife,
The third instalment of an husband's life.
Rome still has sons, the worthiest of her pride;
Worthiest her helm of government to guide:
To whom she turns, wherever they repair;
Her hope, her hold, her commonwealth is there:
For though her wrongs have here suffused the sword,
Her rights, alas! are still to be restored.
Yes, the republic has defenders left,
Young men and brave; of whom though now bereft,
Them the republic will call home, and bring.
Sweet is the name of peace, and sweet the thing;
But peace and slavery are not quite the same:
Peace is that order, freedom would reclaim;
Slavery that last of curses, which to fly,
A man should fight, and, if in vain, should die.

" What though our champions now from sight recede,
They leave the grand example of their deed;
That patriot deed, unparalleled by man,
Since Rome was walled, or since her hills began.
Brutus of old drove out the Tarquin proud,
When Rome acknowledged kings, and laws allowed;
Manlius was crushed, and Spurius Cassius slain,
And Melius, merely for attempts to reign;
But these unsheathed their swords, and these alone,
Against a despot reigning on his throne.
A deed, admiring Gods confessed sublime;
And men shall rival, to the end of time;
The more, that these won honour by the blow,
And fame, for which the heavens appear too low.
For, here though virtue is its own reward,
And each man's conscience will the best accord,
No mortal can immortal fame contemn,
And all must covet such, as hallows them.

LV.

" Recall, Mark Anthony, recall that hour,
Thy laws razed out the Dictatorial power.

Think, with what heart the senate hailed those laws;
Compute Rome's rapture, and the world's applause,
Compute with these the trade since driven by thee,
Whate'er its profit, and e'en thou shalt see,
How vast a difference severs praise and pelf,
How weak, for lucre's sake, to sell thyself.
In vain! Like matter's is the mind's disease:
As meats the feverish palate cease to please,
So souls for virtue lose their natural gust,
Pierced with the plague of avarice, fraud, and lust.
Still, if to virtue praise can not entice,
Has fear no power to frighten thee from vice?
Thou fear'st no laws:—Because thou dost no wrong?
I wish thee joy. Because too great and strong?
Beware! That confidence may fail thee here.
Who feared no laws, had something else to fear.
Dost hope, those swords from justice will secure thee?
Why they, who wield them, will not long endure thee.
And what existence thine the while, to spend
Each night and day in fear of every friend!
Unless thy gifts have bound those creatures more,
Than some were bound, whose daggers reeked with gore,
Or thou couldst vie with him in aught besides,
Whose gore made reek those daggers, on the Ides.

There was in him a genius vast and rare;
Thought, memory, learning, industry, and care:
Long did he study plans, and late attain,
Through toils and perils, what he planned, to reign;
Abroad, his wars were fatal to the state,
Fatal to man, but, none dispute it, great;
By largess, shows, and monuments, at home,
He charmed the ignorant multitude of Rome:
Rewards attached his followers to their chief,
A show of clemency his foes; in brief,
He some by patience, some by fear, depraved,
Till liberal Rome by habit was enslaved.

XLVI.

" Like him in nothing, save insatiate thirst
For power and pelf, his vices, and his worst,
Know, with the woes his tyranny inured,
One useful lesson Rome at least secured,
Where to withhold her credit, where repose,
And how discern, and handle, friends and foes.
What! Canst not learn, nor profit, by his fate,
That taught the brave, how just the deed and great,

Grateful the blessing, glorious the renown,
To kill a tyrant, though he wear no crown?
Canst think the land, where he was not endured,
Will tolerate thee? Hereafter, rest assured,
Men will not wait occasion's time and place,
But rush, to do it, like rivals in a race.

" Come, Anthony, regard thy country; think,
Whence thy descent, and not with whom thy drink.
At length, I pray thee, let this quarrel end,
With me or not, e'en as thy thoughts intend,
But make it up with Rome! be the republic's friend!
Or choose what measures for thyself may please;
Mine too are chosen, and proclaimed for these—
I saved my country from a traitor's rage,
In youth; I will not leave her, in mine age:
I braved the daggers of a Cataline;
I ne'er shall quail, Mark Anthony, to thine.
Nay, could the blow bring forth the tardy birth,
Could but my bloodshed speed the throes of earth,
And nerve my country and my kind o'erthrown,
Their necks to rescue, lo! I bare mine own.
For, in these walls if erst I dared deny
Rome's consulars could e'er untimely die,

How much more now is that denial due,
When nineteen years have past to prove it true.
Death, conscript fathers, with the fame I share,
For toils and honours, death should be my prayer.
And but two vows beside can bend my knee:
First, let me leave the Roman people free!
No destiny could bring a dearer boon to me:
Next, may the Gods judge all of mortal birth,
And deal with each according to his worth,
As each deserves of Rome, of freedom, and the earth."

Ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἐπὶ προχοῇσι διίπετέος ποταμοῖο
Βέβρυχεν μέγα κῦμα ποτὶ ῥόον, ἀμφὶ δέ τ' ἄκραι
Ἠιόνες βοόωσιν, ἐρευγομένης ἁλὸς ἔξω.

——— "Sed tantum inchoata res est; ut pœne vitio mentis tantum opus ingressus mihi videar: quum præsertim alia quoque studia, ad id opus, multoque potiora, impertiar."

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